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**THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE: UNDERSTANDING
VARIABLES THAT CREATE THE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE CURRENT
SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE AND THE ACTIVITIES OUTLINED BY
AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION**

By

CANDACE MARIE WILLIAMS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION IN
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
Division of Education and Counseling

May 2018

Dissertation Committee:
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THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE

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Xavier University of Louisiana
New Orleans, Louisiana

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

This is to certify that the Doctoral Dissertation of

CANDACE MARIE WILLIAMS

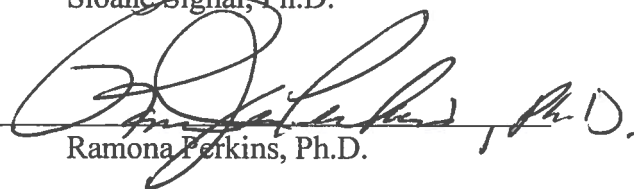
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May, 2018.



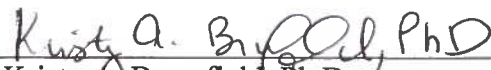
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Abstract

by Candace M. Williams, Ed.D.
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May 2018

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This study investigated the alignment between the school counselor's role as actualized in schools and as outlined by the American School Counselor Association. The study examined preservice school counselor training, and current school counselor practices to identify barriers that challenge the counselor's ability to meet the needs of the whole child. The study answered four questions: 1) If perceived discrepancies exist between actual school counselor roles and ASCA crafted activities, what are the discrepancies? 2) How do the discrepancies between actual school counselor roles and ASCA job activities happen? 3) How do school counselor duties and time spent align with their current practice in supporting student success? (i.e. are school counselors performing duties outside of their role not related to student success) and 4) How effectively did preservice training prepare school counselors for their current role as a school counselor? The result of this study expanded a very small body of literature discussing the difference of the ASCA school counselor role and actual current counselor practices.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASCA: American School Counseling Association

BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan

FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment

IEP: Individual Education Plan

SPED: Special Education

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Rev. Bobby Williams Sr. and Cynthia Williams, who provided me with support, a strong foundation, and a foundation in God. This dissertation is also dedicated to my Marie Williams, my maternal grandmother. This dissertation is devoted to the memory of Arthur Williams, my maternal grandfather, and Olivia Francois, my paternal grandmother. This dissertation is also dedicated to Bobby Williams Jr., my brother, who encouraged me to persist in my dissertation pursuit despite adversity. This dissertation is also dedicated to Kalia Williams and Bobby Williams III, my niece and nephew, who provided much needed distractions and smiles in my dissertation journey. This dissertation is also dedicated to Dr. Dymphna Davis, my friend, who provided support, laughter, and a listening ear. This dissertation is also dedicated to my cousins who provided laughs, encouragement, and prayers. This dissertation is also dedicated to my family, colleagues, friends, and students.

Thank you all!

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since No Child Left Behind, the mission of public education has gone from preparing students for college to preparing students for colleges and career. Today's schools face multiple demands in successfully educating and preparing all students. Public education, therefore, is challenged to provide appropriate resources and personnel in providing equitable and effective education to all students.

School counselors can be effectively positioned to increase success among students (Bemak, Chung, & Siroskey-Sabdo, 2005). Despite reforms from ASCA, school counselors continue to perform tasks inconsistent with their training, expectations, and best practices (Robertson, Lloyd-Hazlett, Zambrano, & McClendon, 2016). Appropriate responsibilities such as coordinating testing and scheduling, facilitating meetings between parents, consultations, connecting outside agencies and resources, providing individual counseling and/or group guidance, and more are assigned to school counselors (Bemak, Chung, & Siroskey-Sabdo, 2005). With so many counseling and non-counseling tasks such as clerical duties, performance of disciplinary actions, supervision of classrooms, teaching, or maintain student records, counselors do not have adequate time to effectively achieve all tasks. As the world continues to evolve, so does the role of school counselors.

Public education helps students in their ability to function so that they are prepared for the workforce or college (Edwards, 2015). Therefore, educational systems must provide appropriate resources and personnel to accommodate the differences and needs of all students. Barton and Coley (2011) recognized that today's schools face extraordinary challenges in preparing all students for today's changing job market, and for the diversity of postsecondary

experiences. The mission of schools has undergone many changes. Barton and Coley (2011) argued that “a decade and a half ago, education reformers called to define the mission of the high school as the preparation of students to succeed in college”, and as time progressed, the “mission has been expanded and further defined as the preparation of students for both “college and careers.” (p. 3).

In response to many societal events and influences, Burnham and Jackson (2000) stated the role of the school counselor has been redefined and expanded through the years. Due to school counseling changes, American School Counselor Association (ASCA) developed a framework for implementing a comprehensive school counseling (CSC) program to have a clear understanding of the role and direction for the school counseling profession (Jaymes, 2011). Furthermore, ASCA published The National Standards for School Counseling Programs to become more involved in educational reform (Burnham & Jackson, 2000).

The shift in the school counselor’s role should support improved student success. School counseling program activities can help students problem-solve, decrease discipline-related issues, increase academic success and standardized test scores, improve attendance and graduation rates, and promote a sense of school safety, and belongingness (Robertson, Lloyd-Hazlett, Zambrano, & McClendon, 2016). Furthermore, the appropriate placement of school counselors results in fewer intrapersonal and interpersonal problems, enhances mental health functioning, and offers greater knowledge of career and educational choices (Robertson, Lloyd-Hazlett, Zambrano, & McClendon, 2016). Therefore, increasing student success with school counselors can be a viable and effective solution if the roles and responsibilities of counselors make a shift to focus on specific areas. School counselors are in positions in which they can assist in academic, career, and personal/social areas (Gnilka, Karpinski, & Smith, 2015). While

many previous studies addressed the role of school counselors, very few studies address variables that contribute to the school counselor activities and position.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the alignment between the actual school counselor role and practice along with appropriate and inappropriate activities and assignment of the school counselor crafted by ASCA. The purpose included examining preservice school counselor training, school leader knowledge, and appropriate activities outlined by ASCA with the current school counselor experience. The purpose helped to determine variables that create the alignment between ASCA activities and actual school counselor practice and elaborated on what can be done to ensure the appropriate assignment of the school counselor.

Problem Statement

ASCA has outlined standards and appropriate activities of the school counselor role. Nonetheless, ambiguity and uncertainty regarding school counselor roles and responsibilities still exist. This study addressed variables that contribute to the alignment in appropriate school counselor activities outlined by ASCA compared to practicing school counselor activities. The study was designed to understand the experience of practicing school counselors in comparison to how ASCA crafts the school counselor role.

Significance of the Study

Despite evidence-based interventions and efforts by professional associations, such as ASCA, to define the school counseling profession, the actual functions of school counselors often do not reflect best practices in school counseling (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). The current way school counselors spend their time, and the amount of time school counselors spend on tasks are not aligned to ASCA crafted activities. Bardhoshi, Schweinle, and Duncan (2014)

discovered that the tasks school counselors prefer to do include individual student academic planning, individual and group counseling, providing counseling to students with disciplinary or behavioral concerns, collaboration with staff, and advocating for students. While most studies provide descriptions of the practice of school counselors, there is limited scholarly research that examined the factors that influence the school counselor practice (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Consequently, understanding variables that influence the way school counselors spend their time remains unclear. The results of this study expand a very small body of literature that discussed the variables which influence school counselor tasks, and activities school counselors spend their time on. This study expanded counselor preparation along with an emphasis on the need to increase school counselor knowledge and activities in educational leadership preparation. This study also created a greater understanding of practicing school counselor identities, provided insight to create more clearly defined school counselor roles, and developed literature concerning variables that contribute to the activities and assignment of school counselors.

Research Questions

The study aimed to answer four questions: 1) If perceived discrepancies exist between actual school counselor roles and ASCA crafted activities, what are the discrepancies? 2) How do the discrepancies between actual school counselor roles and ASCA job activities happen? 3) How do school counselor duties and time spent align with their current practice in supporting student success? (i.e. are school counselors performing duties outside of their role not related to student success); and 4) How effectively did preservice training prepare school counselors for their current role as a school counselor?

Research Methodology

This study utilized phenomenology. Phenomenology, a strategy of inquiry in which the research identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as a philosophy or framework as well as a method, involves studying a small number of subjects through the extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships to meanings (Creswell, 2009). The researcher sets aside his or her own experiences to understand the participants' perspective (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). The intent of this phenomenological research was to obtain a detailed experience of participant experiences by using open-ended questions, interview data, text analysis, and theme interpretation. (Creswell, 2009).

Definitions

School Counselors: are certified/licensed educators with a minimum of a master's degree in counseling, making them uniquely qualified to address all students' academic, career and social/emotional development needs by designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student success.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): multisource assessment procedures that examine relationships between student characteristics and contextual variables that trigger and maintain behavior.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): a plan that is based on the results of a FBA and, at a minimum, includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs and intervention strategies that include positive behavioral supports and services to address the behavior.

Summary

This chapter discussed the purpose of education and briefly highlighted the evolution of education equity, or the lack thereof. The evolution of the school counselor, and terms that will be used throughout the study, were also defined in this chapter. This study described the school counselor activities and expectations as defined by ASCA along with the actual practices of school counselors. This chapter also introduced variables that contribute to the alignment between ASCA defined school counselor roles and actual school counselor practices.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will provide an overview of how educational laws continue to evolve to provide an equitable education to all students, along with highlighting professional counseling organizations. This chapter will also discuss the academic and emotional needs of K-12 students in schools, provide the historical context of school counselors, and explain the activities crafted by ASCA compared to actual school counselor roles. To understand the context in which this study was conducted, it is important to briefly review educational laws that have been mandated to ensure an equal and equitable education for all students. Additionally, of importance to this study is the history of the shift in school the counselor role, the inappropriate assignment of school counselors, and the current school counselor activities. The historical literature speaks to the significance of the alignment between the ASCA school counselor job activities and actual school counselor roles.

Equitable Education and Transformation in Education Laws

To successfully improve and sustain quality and effective schools, change must occur. Like the metamorphosis of butterflies, schools too must undergo their own transformation. A typical American public school is structured so that students who are labeled as “high readiness” perform academically better than average, while students labeled as “low readiness” perform worse than the average (Gaynor, 2012). Due to that school structure, that has been existing for years, an achievement gap was created (Chmielewski, A. K., & Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA), 2017). Some students, therefore, get lost in the gap, and lose confidence, desire to attend school, and motivation to perform. Those students also have a higher probability in school failure and are unprepared for postsecondary education or employment. To promote an

accessible and equitable education for all students, the structure of schools must be reformed (Gaynor, 2012).

Schlechty (2009) examined the difference between reform and transformation. While reform generally meant changing policies, procedures, processes, and technologies with the intent of improving the performance of current systems, transformation was intended to make it possible to do things that have never been done by the organization (Schlechty, 2009). Instead of changing an existing system, transformation is a complete makeover that involves radical and complex processes. Educational laws have attempted to transform education.

Previously, the federal government responded to the failure of Brown's promise of equal educational opportunity by introducing the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the Race to the Top Act of 2009 (RTT) (Sundquist, 2017). The intent behind NCLB and RTT was to promote educational reform informed by the classic market principles of consumer choice, competition, and accountability (Sundquist, 2017). Under this plan, the failure of America's public schools could be attributed to an overregulation of education that has promoted bureaucratic stillness, unsuccessful teaching, and unaccountability at the cost of the individual liberty of parents and children to attend the school of their choice (Sundquist, 2017).

The failures of the NCLB and RTT to promote student achievement, much less equality in education, forced Congress to authorize Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Act in December of 2015 (Sundquist, 2017). ESSA has been welcomed by both liberal and conservative education reformers for superseding the NCLB and RTT framework, and for changing control over certain aspects of public education policy to state and local stakeholders. The ESSA focused on promoting student achievement through consumer choice, accountability, high-stakes testing,

and inter-school competition. The expectations of public schools are now expected to serve all students equally while also demanding new approaches to teaching and learning (Hollar, 2017).

Wimberly (2002) discussed the importance of preparing students for success postsecondary and workplace environments. Strong school relationships can help increase student motivation to be successful (Wimberly, 2002). Counselors can be effectively positioned to build relationships and help increase student growth and success. Lapan, Wells, Petersen, and McCann (2014) found when school counseling services build relationships responsive to the needs of students, they have the potential to lessen some of the negative influence of risk factors such as high mobility rates and limited English proficiency. Furthermore, findings indicate that relationship among the school counselor and student resulted in an increase student in success in both academic and nonacademic areas (Lapan, Wells, Peterson, & McCann, 2014).

Professional Counseling Organizations

As the federal government responded to educational gaps and needs by creating mandates and laws, professional organizations also developed measures to promote educational reform that impacts the counseling profession. Some of the professional organizations included the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the organizations are the American Counseling Association (ACA), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the National Career Development Association (NCDA), and the one most influential to this study, the American School Counseling Association (ASCA). Many of the professional organizations have Specialized Professional Association (SPA) standards for curriculum and educator preparation.

ASCA

ASCA was developed in the 1950s to help the professional identity of school counselors. It is a division under ACA, and was founded to give credentials, standards, and guidelines to school counselors. The mission of ASCA is to represent school counselors and promote professionalism and ethical practices. Out of the development of ASCA came a professional identity that was weakened by an alliance among educators, social workers, and psychologists (Perkins, 2006). That alliance continues to plague school counselors today because it was the foundation of tasks such as testing and scheduling (Perkins, 2006). Along with the promotion of professional identity, the development of ASCA provides research and professional development strategies. Contributing to the continuous development of the counselor identity, ASCA also publishes in its own professional journal, *The School Counselor* (Perkins, 2006). The ASCA School Counselor Preparation Program Standards establishes ASCA as a Specialized Professional Association (SPA) under the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

ACA

In 1952, The National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA), the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers (NAGCT), the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education (SPATE), and the American College Personnel Association all met to provide a larger professional voice for the counseling profession. Their action step was to establish the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA). In 1983, the name later changed to the American Association of Counseling and Development and on July 1, 1992, the association changed its name to the American Counseling Association (ACA). This name change happened to mirror the common bond among association members, and to emphasize their unity

of purpose. “The American Counseling Association promotes public confidence and trust in the counseling profession so that professionals can further assist their clients and students in dealing with the challenges life presents” (American Counseling Association, 2018). The mission of ACA is to develop the quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity (American Counseling Association, 2018).

ACES

The formation of the Association occurred in 1940 as the National Association of Guidance Supervisors (NAGS). It was a small, informal, and modest group of state supervisors of guidance and counseling services. Through quality preparation, the accreditation process, and professional development activities, ACES strives to improve education, supervision, and credentialing of counselors who work in public and private sectors. ACES is an association devoted to quality education and supervision of counselors in all work settings. ACES members include counselors, graduate students, supervisors, and faculty members who work to improve the education and supervision of counselors in training and practice.

NCDA

The National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA) was founded in 1913. In 1985 NVGA became the National Career Development Association (NCDA). When founded in 1913, it became an association that helped individuals and communities transition from an agricultural to industrial society. The mission of NCDA is to provide professional development, publications, standards, and advocacy to practitioners and educators who inspire and empower individuals to

achieve their career and life goals. It is also a founding division of ACA. NCDA is also a division under ACA.

CACREP

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) developed several standards and accreditation-related documents that enabled them to conduct voluntary accreditation of counseling programs. ACES approached the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA, a precursor to ACA) about cooperative accreditation efforts. It resulted in the establishment of CACREP in 1981. CACREP is an association committed to providing leadership and promoting excellence in professional preparation through the accreditation of counseling and related educational programs. CACREP aims to promote the professional competence of counseling and related practitioners through the development of preparation standards, the encouragement of excellence in program development, and the accreditation of professional preparation programs.

CAEP

The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) was first founded in 1954 as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as a non-profit, non-governmental accrediting body. The mission of CAEP is to advance equity and excellence in educator preparation by using evidence-based accreditation. CAEP assures quality and supports continuous improvement to strengthen P-12 student learning. CAEP has a strong and rich foundation and history teacher and educator preparation accreditation. CAEP aims to increase the value of accreditation and to increase participation, while building on the decades of institutional knowledge of education's previous accreditors.

Issues Currently Faced by Students

Due to issues such as poverty, child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, and violence in urban cities, students face many barriers in their education and school environments (Heathfield & Clark, 2004). One in four children has a diagnosable mental health need which can have an overwhelming outcome on personal and academic development and achievement (DeKruyf, Auger & Trice-Black (2013). Additionally, more than 75% of children in need of mental health services will not receive them (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013).

For students with an array of mental health diagnoses, whether Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), disruptive behavior disorders, or mood disorders, school outcomes have been consistently inferior when compared to students who do not have those issues (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). Even more, over half of students who dropped out of school have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). Dwyer (2002) argued that schools respond to misbehavior in the form of expulsions and suspensions; however, expulsions and suspensions increased the intensity of emotional disturbances in students. Expulsions and suspensions do not address problem behaviors or provide the needed proactive and preventative strategies for students (Heathfield & Clark, 2004). Moreover, students tended to respond negatively to environments inadequately prepared to effectively meet their needs (Dwyer, 2002).

The need for mental health and supportive services is often increased. School counselors have been frequently marginally involved in supporting students with needs (O'Connor, 2018; DeKruyf, Auger, Trice-Black, 2013). However, school counselors often do not have the time or support needed to address the needs of all students (O'Connor, 2018). ASCA aimed to provide clarity to the professional identity of school counselors (Bardhoshi, Schweinle & Duncan, 2014).

Wade, Janice, Qi (2009) argued that ASCAs' focus to improve students' academic achievement has been a significant and a helpful shift in the identity of school counselors.

Due to a high prevalence of increased academic and social/emotional needs among students, and the low number of those students who receive appropriate support for those needs, the school counselor role and identity must also shift to meet the growing needs of students. The shift must include an embraced identity as educational leaders and mental health professionals.

ASCA has identified the appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors.

Inappropriate activities are coordinating paperwork and data entry of all new students coordinating cognitive, aptitude and achievement testing programs, signing excuses for students who are tardy or absent, performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences, sending students home who are not appropriately dressed, teaching classes when teachers are absent, and computing grade-point averages (Appropriate Activities of School Counselors, n.d.). Other inappropriate activities crafted by ASCA are maintaining student records, supervising classrooms or common areas, keeping clerical records, assisting with duties in the principal's office, providing therapy or long-term counseling in schools to address psychological disorders, coordinating schoolwide individual education plans, student study teams and school attendance review boards, and serving as a data entry clerk (Appropriate Activities of School Counselors, n.d.).

The appropriate activities crafted by ASCA for school counselors are individual student academic program planning, interpreting cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests, providing counseling to students who are tardy or absent, providing counseling to students who have disciplinary problems, providing counseling to students as to appropriate school dress, collaborating with teachers to present school counseling core curriculum lessons, and analyzing

grade-point averages in relationship to achievement (Appropriate Activities of School Counselors, n.d.). The remaining school counselor activities considered appropriate by ASCA are interpreting student records, providing teachers with suggestions for effective classroom management, ensuring student records are maintained as per state and federal regulations, helping the school principal identify and resolve student issues, needs and problems, providing individual and small-group counseling services to students, advocating for students at individual education plan meetings, student study teams and school attendance review boards, and analyzing disaggregated data (Appropriate Activities of School Counselors, n.d.).

The Role of School Counselors

The ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs and The Education Trust's School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) stressed the notion that every student should benefit from the school counseling program (Perkins, Oescher, & Ballard, 2010). Education Trust studied how to improve school counseling programs nationwide. The study examined how school counselors were trained. The results discovered that school counselor training was helpful in identifying gaps and systems that prohibit effective student growth and development (Perkins, Oescher, & Ballard, 2010; Lowery, L. M., Bommelje, S., Trust, E., Kobbah, S., Dysarz, K., Berger, K., Morgan, 2018).

ASCA and TSCI promoted school counselors to embrace an academic focus on whole school and system issues rather than a mental health, personal/social focus with individuals and small groups (Perkins, Oescher & Ballard, 2010). The study also emphasized how changes in the school counseling profession have aligned with movements in educational reform and legislation. Perkins, Oescher and Ballard (2010) argued that the change in school counselors' roles and functions reflect the profession's efforts to respond to social, economic, political

trends, and academic trends. In the 21st century, with the key goal of closing the achievement gap between minority and disadvantaged youth, The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was implemented (Perkins, Oescher & Ballard, 2010). With the No Child Left Behind Act, the focus shifted from input to output for school personnel to be more accountable in student achievement. The transformation for school personnel, such as counselors, to be more accountable for student achievement made counselors significant players, leaders, and change agents within the schools (Perkins, Oescher & Ballard, 2010).

Awe and Portman (2009) reported that “twenty years ago, futurists examined the changing role of the school counselor and forecasted what the 21st century school counselors would need to know.” They found that there was a greater focus on student success and school achievement for all students. With a changing ecosystem and societal environment, accountability in school counseling programs became an area of concern in the 1930s (Vaughn, Bynum, & Hooten, 2007). In the 1930s, guidance programs were mandated to show results in standard of scholarship, dropout rates, lesser disciplinary cases, improved morale in student body, lesser failures and withdrawals, fewer absences, students more informed about their future, better study habits, and more intelligent selection of subjects. Since school counselors are constantly being challenged concerning their roles and identities, the importance on accountability for school counselors is even greater (Vaughn, Bynum, & Hooten, 2007).

In response to the extensive societal changes and educational reforms caused in the late 1800s by the Industrial Revolution, school counseling was birthed. There was a need to shift countless people from farms to factories. (Herr, 2013). Vocational guidance in schools has helped students transition from school to the workforce. Due to educational reforms and issues faced by schools, the school counselor role continues to evolve. However, it remained unclear

concerning appropriate and effective responsibilities (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). Many educational and societal concerns, along with government agencies and the public, forces the role of school counselors to constantly be reassessed.

Traditionally, school counselors worked with students who were involved in substance use and gang involvement, exhibited delinquent behaviors, and students who were considered at risk of dropping out of school (Webb, Webb, & Fults-McMurtery, 2011). However, with the implementation of numerous legislative mandates and the allocation of professional counseling organizations' position statements relating to properly educating all students, school counselor roles have changed to guarantee that the needs of all are met. Despite the existence of role statements and mandates from organizations such as ASCA, discrepancy still exists in the effective placement of the school counselor role (Lieberman, 2004).

To advance students' academic, career, personal, and social development, counselors must evolve into advocates in which they apply systems and operate as agents of social change in their work with students, families, teachers, and administrators, with the expectation that awareness of the greater perspective for behavior that will help enable positive outcomes for all students and for the community at large (Dodson, 2009; Mau, Li, & Hoetmer, 2016). School counselors are among the educators being held accountable for the deficiency of academic achievement among diverse students, including students with disabilities and minority and poor children (Mitcham, Portman, & Dean, 2009).

Counselors have changed from "agents of status quo" and as gatekeepers for tracking and other educational practices that limit the educational and career opportunities for disadvantaged and minority students (Mitcham, Portman, & Dean, 2009). Counselors have evolved to advocates for all students and promote systemic change through a comprehensive guidance program

(Mitcham, Portman, & Dean, 2009). The role of the traditional school counselor has transformed to the role of social justice advocates with responsibilities to close the achievement gap and function as change agents in relation to cultural, racial, and socioeconomic disparities, while simultaneously empowering students, communities, families, and education systems. The shift in the school counselor role calls for counselors to focus on strategies for improved academic performance along with better outcomes to promote student achievement among all students.

School counselors, therefore, must become more visible and accountable, move beyond the current helper-responder role, and become proactive advocates and leaders for the success of all students. For years, school counselors fought to define their image as an essential part of the school and how they contribute to the success of students (Vaughn, Bynum, & Hooten, 2007). School counselor roles, responsibilities, and evaluation are often based on the school administrator; therefore, the views, expectations and responsibilities of school counselors vary. Vaughn, Bynum and Hooten (2007) found that principals frequently assign counselors tasks without knowledge of the ASCA National Standards or completely ignore the effective school counseling programs.

Johnson, Milltello, and Kosine (2008) argued that the ultimate responsibility for the proper and effective position of all school-based personnel resides with the school principal. The appropriate placement of school-based staff was found to have a positive correlation to student success (Lieberman, 2004). Appropriate assignment of school staff necessitates a clear understanding of all school staff and their roles. Clarity regarding the school counselor roles has been nonexistent for a while (Lieberman, 2004). Having clarity on the suitable school counselor roles can improve services and programs for students (Dollarhide, Smith, & Lemberger, 2007).

The appropriate and effective assignment of school counselors seem unclear to students, school leaders, practicing counselors, and the larger educational community.

Confusion and lack of clarity concerning the school counselor role and responsibilities in schools have been noticeable and problematic in the educational field for years. Lieberman (2004) suggested that because of the lack of clarity in school counselor roles, students and the school counseling profession suffer. Therefore, counselor roles must evolve to “become more involved as leaders and partners with teachers, parents, and administrators in improving academic and behavioral issues of their students” (Vaughn, Bynum, & Hooten, 2007). School counseling programs must also support and integrate advocacy, leadership, and collaboration. The school counselor profession should embrace an identity as an educational leader and mental health professional (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). Students can receive effective support and services by a balanced professional school counselor role, which includes advocacy and the knowledge and skills that are appropriate to address the students’ mental and emotional health concerns.

Actual School Counselor Roles

Paterson (2015) conducted a survey among school counselors regarding their caseloads and actual job responsibilities. While one participant stated that there was not enough time in the day to perform all expected tasks, another participant reported that her day is full of everything except what she should be doing in her job description (Paterson, 2015). Similarly, another participant who worked at a large school reported that there were five counselors at her school who serve 2000 students (Paterson, 2015). Although ASCA has crafted key areas of personal, social, academic, and academic preparation, school counselors are spread too thin. While small schools do not have as many students as large schools, small school counselors still face

challenge. Due to no assistant principals, a school counselor at a small school reported that she must take on administrative responsibility and other tasks (Paterson, 2015). The administrative responsibility of the school counselor infers there a gap between administrative tasks and appropriate personnel (Paterson, 2015).

Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) investigated preferred school counselor practice and the actual school counselor practice. They addressed the discrepancy between the actual school counselor practice and what was advocated as best school counselor practice. Many previous studies offered descriptions of best practices for school counselors, but it remained unclear about factors that contributed to the discrepancy between school counselor best practices and the way school counselors spent their time (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). The results of the study indicated that there was statistical significance in how much time school counselors spent doing non-counseling tasks such as clerical or administrative duties. Results also indicated that participants preferred to spend their time doing counseling activities over non-counseling activities (Bardhoshi, Schweinle, & Duncan, 2014; Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008).

Goodman-Scott (2015) argued that even though associations such as Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and ASCA have been influential in defining school counselor description and job activities, inconsistencies between school counselors' academic preparation and practice still exist. In numerous circumstances, the ideal school counselor role, provided by the experts differ from the realities of actual school counseling practice. Goodman-Scott (2015) stated that "in a time of budget cuts and high student ratios, school counselors-in-training need to be prepared not only for professional best practices but also for the realities of the field." Goodman-Scott (2015) conducted a study of a national sample of ASCA member school counselors who graduated with

a master's degree in school counseling between 2002 and 2012. Participants reported in engaging moderately in services labeled fair share and clerical. The fair share activities were tasks such as committee participation and coordinating standardized tests. Clerical tasks were activities such as enrolling new students and scheduling students for classes.

It is still unclear why the discrepancy of school counselor best practices and actual school counselor practices happen. Scarborough and Culbreth (2008) addressed the systemic research on the factors that are connected to the inconsistencies in how school counselors realistically spend their time. Variables such as school level of employment (elementary, middle, or high school), number of students per caseload, amount of time spent in non-counseling activities, and professional identity, development, and training, were identified as having an impact on the school counselor practices (Bardhoshi, Schweinle & Duncan, 2014). Furthermore, the person's years of experience as a school counselor could have influence on the school counselor practice (Scarborough & Culbreth, 2008). Likewise, organizational school cultures and school counselors' self-efficacy were identified as factors that can contribute to the misalignment (Bardhoshi, Schweinle, & Duncan, 2014). Also recognized as variables related to school counselor practices are how school counselors prefer to spend their time and implementation of comprehensive and development school counseling models.

The Impact on the Counseling Profession, School Culture, and Student Support

School counselors have positions in which they can positively influence school culture and supports for students. School counselors work to assist students to maximize scholastic achievement and lifelong learning among students, promote an understanding of career, and foster healthy personal and social growth (Wilkerson, 2009). Salina, Girtz, Eppinga, Martinez, Kilian, Lozano, & Shines (2013) conducted a case study with a turnaround principal and the

counseling department. The study examined how a school-wide comprehensive counseling program impacted high school graduation rates. The findings of the study indicated that the implementation of school counselor supports through the lenses of academic press, social, support, and relational trust led to perceived and actual graduation rates and student achievement.

The school climate is essential to the educational mission of schools. Changing a school's climate can have a significant positive effect on feeling safe in the school community. Hernandez and Seem (2004) found that schools with high student disruption, ineffective communication among staff, and unclear structures and consequences are linked to negative or unsafe feelings of school safety. School counselors play a critical leadership role in creating a safe learning environment. The researchers examined supports school counselors give such as 1) providing individual and group sessions and classroom guidance; 2) developing school traditions and rituals; 3) implementing and coordinating school wide character education program; 4) coordinating mentoring programs; 4) addressing the school's behavior and discipline policies; and 5) working in a leadership capacity among staff to foster a safe school climate (Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Schools that teach students social and emotional skills to help them learn about self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making have lesser disciplinary issues and increased academic achievement (Warner & Heindel, 2017).

Nonetheless, the ambiguity of the school counselor role continues to have an impact on the school counselor profession, the individual counselor, and the students. School counselors have great levels of stress that results in higher than average burnout rates when compared to other mental health and counseling professionals. It was found that school counselors who

engaged in non-school counseling activities, had countless job responsibilities, and were overworked had decreased job satisfaction (Pyne, 2011). Likewise, many researchers have examined the concept of burnout among school counselors. Twenty-one to sixty-seven percent of counselors reported experiencing feelings of burnout (Limberg, Lambie, & Robinson, 2016). Burnout is the physical and emotional exhaustion that creates a negative impact on students, a poor outlook on their job, and a negative self-image. Gnilka, Karpinski, and Smith (2015) defined school counselor burnout as “a combination of multiple physical and emotional symptoms” that can “compromise their well-being and their ability to serve students.”

Heightened levels of burnout among school counselors may lead to mental health issues in school counselors such as substance abuse and other negative consequences such as low work productivity or low self-esteem. In turn, schools, students, and other school stakeholders are impacted. On average, 90 % of school counselors experienced stress due to their job (Limberg, Lambie, and Robinson, 2016). Burnout in the school counseling profession are influenced by factors such as high student to counselor ratio, a great amount of non-counseling activities, role discrepancies, emotional exhaustion, and an increase of crisis intervention due to the increase of school violence nationwide (Gnilka, Karpinski, & Smith, 2015; Limberg, Lambie, & Robinson, 2016). Considering the multitude of tasks of school counselors, which in turn may lead to burnout, low productivity, and school counselor retention, the school counselor profession is impacted. Likewise, the level of student supports is decreased and creating and sustaining a positive and safe school wide culture becomes hindered. Hence, it is essential to understand the variables impacting the discrepancy between ASCA and actual school counselor practices. Doing so will address school counselor burnout, and effectively position school counselors to improve school climate and academic, career, and personal/social issues relating to student success.

School Leader Knowledge about School Counseling

School leaders play a tremendous role in determining the duties and responsibilities of school counselors. In the study previously discussed by Paterson (2015), a school counselor at a small school reported that she must take on administrative responsibility and other tasks because the principal has no assistants. Since ambiguity of the school counselor role remains, school leaders may also be unclear about appropriate tasks and practices of school counselors. Wade, Janice, and Qi, (2009) examined school principals' perceptions of the school counselor role. Building principals often ask school counselors to engage in tasks that are not aligned to the standards developed by ASCA. Some of the duties the principals ask counselors to perform are tasks such as keeping student records, administering student discipline, completing lunch duty, clerical tasks, or developing master schedules. In the study by Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009), the authors explained that many pre-professional principals believed that registration, record keeping, testing, and assisting with special education services were significant or highly significant counselor roles. According to ASCA, those beliefs of the pre-professional principals are not appropriate school counselor roles. Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009) described several studies in their research which explained how principals believed that school counselors should perform test administration, record keeping, and other duties in the principal's office. Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009) discovered that principals also acknowledged positive ways school counselors help and create effective change. Principals, however, understood the role as only an administrative assistant or advocate of students.

The counselor-principal relationship is also stressed as an important variable in understanding current school counselor practices. Most principals have no understanding of the role of school counselors or the impact school counselors could have as leaders (Wade, Janice, &

Qi 2009). The counselor-principal relationship was also impacted by mandates and school reforms initiatives that focus on greater accountability, equity, and student achievement (Wade, Janice, & Qi 2009). Likewise, an increase in instructional and administrative procedures, decreasing budgets, and complex legal issues also impact the principal and counselor relationship (Wade, Janice, & Qi 2009). Due to the added pressures of the school leaders, principals often delegate administrative duties to the counselor (Wade, Janice, & Qi 2009).

Chata and Loesch (2007) discussed the views of future school principals regarding the roles of professional school counselors and briefly explained the appropriate roles for school counselors as defined by ASCA. A collaborative and effective counselor and principal relationship is needed for counselors to perform appropriate and effective functions and roles. Chata and Loesch (2007) explained that school principals dictate the role of school counselors, and often use their position to force counselors in performing inappropriate duties. Chata and Loesch (2007) discussed a study in which 80% of the participants identified non-endorsed ASCA tasks such as maintaining student records, administering cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests, and registration and scheduling of all new students as appropriate tasks of school counselors. Chata and Loesch (2007) stated that although ASCA has created standards for school counselors, discrepancies still exist. Without support from the school leaders and appropriate assignment of counselor roles, counselors feel devalued. The principal and counselor must work together to develop a positive relationship.

Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009) discussed the lack of coordination between school counseling graduate training programs and school leader preparation programs. Neither the counselor nor the principal understands the role of the other. In a recent study by Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009), pre-professional principals regarded counselors as staff who completes tasks at

the request of the principal, while counseling education students viewed the counselors' roles as specific to helping students on academic, career, and social/emotional development.

Additionally, the researchers surveyed 1,415 practicing school principals in elementary, middle, high school, and K-12 schools (Wade, Janice, & Qi, 2009). Over half of the participants in the study reported little to no exposure to the ASCA model.

Twenty percent reported very little exposure, 24 % reported some exposure, only 3 % reported a great deal of exposure, and only 0.6 % reported extensive exposure. Principals who reported exposure to ASCA were asked how they became familiar with the model. Seventy-three out of the 1,415 participants reported that they received exposure by a professional school counselor. Forty-three participants reported learning about ASCA at a conference or meeting, while only 6 principals reported learning it through their pre-service training. The findings by Wade, Janice, and Qi (2009) stated that "principals are not systemically exposed to information about roles, responsibilities, missions of the school counseling programs, either in or after graduate school."

The change in the principal role contributed to the assignment of the school counselor role. Greene and Stewart (2016) explained that school principals are now expected to be the professional educator or instructional leaders, the charismatic leader who engages the entire school organization, and the organizational manager. With the increasing roles of principals, principals turned to counselors to perform many non-counseling tasks (Greene & Stewart, 2016). It was suggested by Green and Stewart (2016) that counselors and principals must create a collaborative and effective relationship to help define their roles. Likewise, principals need to be educated about the ASCA National model and appropriate school counselor tasks. Armstrong, MacDonald, and Stillo (2010) surveyed the differences in perceptions of principals and school

counselors concerning their leadership and professional preparation. Over one-third of principals and more than half of the counselors reported that their training did not help them in supporting and working collaboratively with one another. Results suggest that school counselor trainees need additional support in their training regarding the counselor principal relationship. Likewise, school principals reported a lack in their training in how to work with and position school counselors.

Summary

The transformation for an equitable education, professional organizations, issues students currently face, the historical aspects of the role of the school counselor, the function of the school counselor, appropriate and inappropriate roles defined by ASCA, the actual roles of practicing school counselors, the impact on students, the school culture, and school counselor profession, and the school leader knowledge were reviewed in detail. The literature speaks to the significance of the alignment between the ASCA school counselor role and current school counselor practices, along with identifying variables that can contribute to the alignment.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the alignment between the actual school counselor role and practice and activities crafted as appropriate and inappropriate assignment of the school counselor outlined by ASCA. The purpose included examining preservice school counselor training, school leader knowledge, and appropriate activities outlined by ASCA and the current school counselor experience to determine alignment. It examined training and other variables to consider what can be done to ensure the appropriate and effective position of the school counselor. This investigation focused on school counselors who have graduated from CACREP Accredited Counseling Programs and currently work in school settings. It also focused on school leaders who currently work in school settings. This investigation took a qualitative approach utilizing phenomenology. Creswell (2009) stated that “the strategies of inquiry chosen in a qualitative project have a dramatic influence on the procedures.” Lincoln and Guba (2000) stated that “qualitative methods come more easily to humans-as-instruments” (p.198). In the entire qualitative research process, the researcher kept the focus on acquiring the meaning that the participants hold about the issue (Padilla-Diaz, 2015).

Research Questions

The primary research questions for this study were the following: 1) If perceived discrepancies exist between actual school counselor roles and ASCA crafted activities, what are the discrepancies 2) How do the discrepancies between actual school counselor roles and ASCA job activities happen; 3) How do school counselor duties and time spent align with their current practice in supporting student success (i.e. are school counselors performing duties outside of

their role non related to student success); and 4) How effectively did preservice training prepare school counselors for their current role as a school counselor?

The research questions allowed for a better understanding of the school counselor education, the actual school counselor role and responsibilities, and reasoning behind the misalignment between ASCA and practicing school counselor roles. Through analysis of the data, the author gained an understanding of each school counselor individual experience, training, and challenges they currently face in providing appropriate and effective supportive services to students.

Research Plan

This study utilized phenomenological methodology. Phenomenological research is a strategy of inquiry in which the research identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method. The procedure involves studying a small number of subjects through the extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships to meanings (Creswell, 2009). The researcher puts aside his or her own experiences to understand participants (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). The intent of this phenomenological research was to obtain a detailed experience of their experiences using open-ended questions, interview data, text analysis, and theme interpretation (Creswell, 2009). Phenomenology focuses on exploring the nature of a phenomenon by learning about the experience of the people under inquiry in relation to a specific perception (Patton, 2002).

According to Patton (2002), phenomenology gives answers to the following question: “What is the meaning, structure and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people” (p. 4). Therefore, finding out about the essential or underlying meaning of lived experiences was the main objective of this research approach. To attain the

complete depiction, it will reveal how the participants describe their world (Creswell, 2009). In addition to conducting face to face interviews with participants, the researcher asked participants keep a documentation log of their daily activities. Creswell (2009) argued that qualitative researchers generally gather multiple forms of data instead of relying on a single data source.

The purpose of this research project was to find out about the lived experiences of current and practicing school counselors along with experiences and knowledge of their school leaders. By comparing the experiences of the participants, shared experiences were identified and categorized. To acquire participants, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and asked for nominations of school counselors from co-workers, classmates, college staff, friends, and family. The researcher also used snowball sampling in that participants were asked if they would be willing to nominate other school counselors who might be willing to participate in the study. The school leaders who were interviewed were the school leaders of the school counselors who participated in the study. The interviews allowed the researcher to understand the actual experiences and training concerning the current school counselor role.

Participants

Participants for this study consisted of three school counselors and three school leaders from three different schools, two of which were high schools and one was a middle school. The school counselor and school leader of each of the three schools were interviewed individually. The ethnic composition of all schools was predominantly African-American. Two of the school counselor participants were Black and the other was White. Two of the school counselor participants were female and the other was male. All principal participants were female. Two of the principal participants were Black and the other was White. All school counselor participants had a Master's degree in Counseling, and one had a Doctorate degree in Counseling. Two of the

school counselor participants completed the school counseling track and the other participant completed the clinical track. Two of the principal participants had a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and the other participant had a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies. The counselor participants had 5-12 years of experience in counseling. The principal participants had 2-12 years of experience as school leaders. Below is a chart that provides demographic information for all the schools and participants in the study.

Table 1**Participant and School Demographics**

<div> <div>Purple Pink School</div> <div>Orange Yellow School</div> <div>Blue Green School</div> </div>	Participants	Race	Years in Career/or Current School	Licensure or Training	Total Population (Students)	Student Ethnicity	Free/Reduced Lunch
	Ms. Purple (Principal)	Black	5	Not Officially	497	95.4 % African American	93.8 %
	Ms. Pink (Counselor)	White	5	Yes			
	Ms. Orange (Principal)	White	2	No	251	91.6 % African American	79.3 %
	Mr. Yellow (Counselor)	Black	11	Licensure in Progress			
	Ms. Blue (Principal)	Black	12	Not Officially	682	71.9 % African American	90.2 %
	Ms. Green (Counselor)	Black	5	Yes			

Data Collection

Data collection occurred primarily through face-to-face interviews. Since the purpose of this study was to further explore the experiences of the participants and to determine the alignment between the actual school counselor role and best practices as outlined by ASCA, the face-to-face interview process is the best method to use (Creswell, 2009). Every effort was made to preserve the voices of the participants by using direct quotations when appropriate in writing this research report. Data was collected over a three-month period.

The type of interview that was conducted was classified as an exploratory interview. Exploratory interviews are unstructured and semi-structured conversations which primarily focus on gathering detailed and complete information on specific topics or issues of interest. The goal was to obtain relevant information and opinions on the research topic. Padilla-Diaz (2015) cited this characteristic as the major criterion used to distinguish exploratory from in-depth interviews, which are aimed at revealing unconscious motives and attitudes that are difficult to uncover.

Interview questions served as a guide to ensure all participants responded to the same issues. An interview can be described as a communicative process through which the researcher extracts information from the participant. The extracted information was strongly influenced by respondents who interpreted their environment based on their previous experiences. Every interview generated a subjective informative product shaped by the participants' experiences (Delgado & Gutierrez, 2007). When themes emerged from the participants' common experience, the interview questions changed as each interview continued. The researcher also created a log for school counselors that outlined direct and indirect services they provide to students and the school in general. For documentation of daily activities and time spent on the activities, the researcher asked the counselor participants to keep a three-week log of their activities. The

researcher became aware that some school counselors used a service data system for billing, which tracked their activities. Therefore, the researcher substituted their documentation system in exchange for the logs created by the researcher. The researcher received the logs from all school counselor participants, except one. The researcher also observed the counselor participants in their school environments. For the school counselor participant who was unable to complete the log, the researcher observed the participant for a longer period of time.

Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by the ethical principles of research with human participants set forth by the American Counseling Association in the association's Code of Ethics (2016). The researcher received permission from the Institutional Review Board at Xavier (IRB) University of Louisiana before the researcher conducted this study. See Appendix A. The researcher obtained informed consent for each participant. See Appendix B.

Trustworthiness

The researcher completed a pilot study. The design for this research project and many of the interview questions were completed as a part of the pilot study. According to Kvale (2007), a pilot study should be conducted with participants who have similar interests as those who will participate in the implemented study. Pilot studies assist researchers with the refinement of research questions. The researcher was able to use what the researcher learned in the pilot study to develop the research questions and the interview questions used in this study. A pilot interview was conducted with one person that included five questions. After the questions were asked, the researcher asked for feedback from the participant. The researcher and participant discussed the limitations of the interview design and reviewed the significance of the interview

questions. Because of the pilot study, the researcher made the necessary revisions to the research design including extending the interview time and expanding the interview questions. To gain a deeper understanding of the actual school counselor experience and education, preservice and professional opportunities, and views concerning ASCA, revisions were made to the interview questions that expanded the list of questions from five to ten.

Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by using certain procedures. Qualitative reliability shows that the researcher's approach is consistent across different projects and researchers (Creswell, 2009). To ensure reliability, the researcher checked transcripts to ensure that they did not contain apparent mistakes. The researcher also compared data with the codes and made notes of the codes and their definitions. To ensure validity, the researcher triangulated different data sources of information.

By using data triangulation, individual viewpoints and experiences were verified against others and, ultimately, a rich picture of the perceptions, needs, or behaviors of those under scrutiny were constructed based on the contributions of a range of people (Shenton, 2004). The researcher also utilized member checks to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings. Member checking involved sending interview summaries to my participants and asking them to tell the researcher whether the interview summary was accurate, or if anything needed to be revised. Likewise, to improve the accuracy of the study, the researcher used peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is a method in which the researcher finds someone who reviews and asks questions about the study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher.

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to further investigate the alignment between the actual school counselor role and experience, and the job activities for the appropriate assignment of the school

counselor outlined by ASCA. The purpose included examining preservice school counselor training, and current school counselor experience to determine how the misalignment happens, and what can be done to ensure the appropriate functions of the school counselor. The research project was an attempt to demonstrate why it is important to document experiences, as well as statistical information to better understand how appropriate positions of school counselors can effectively help students grow and achieve personal, social, and school success.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was employed in this phenomenological qualitative study. This chapter also included information on the data collection process as well as data analyses. Additionally, this chapter discussed the research plan, participants, the researcher, and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to provide a description of the lived experiences and practices of school counselors currently working in schools, along with the knowledge and experiences of the school principals at each school. Phenomenology provides an opportunity for individuals to share their life experiences to illuminate the previously misunderstood, unknown, or discounted (Bogdan & Biklen, 1993). A variety of experiences were provided to help the reader understand the research participants. Quotations allowed the participants to speak for themselves, providing multiple perspectives.

In this chapter, the research process from the restatement of the research questions is presented to address issues of trustworthiness. This chapter also presents the key findings obtained from six in-depth interviews beginning with a brief description of the interviewees education and/or training. The findings of the study summarize the lived experiences of school counselors who currently practice in school settings. The findings indicate that current school counselor practices are not aligned with the ASCA outlined activities. The major findings are presented and discussed in this chapter and have been analyzed in chapter five.

Restatement of the Research Questions

The purpose of this phenomenological, qualitative study was to address the alignment in appropriate school counselor activities outlined by ASCA and practicing school counselor activities. The study was designed to understand the variables of practicing school counselors compared to how ASCA outlines the school counselor role. To explore this phenomenon, the researcher examined the following research questions:

- If perceived discrepancies exist between actual school counselor roles and ASCA crafted activities, what are the discrepancies?
- How do the discrepancies between actual school counselor roles and ASCA job activities happen?
- How do school counselor duties and time spent align with their current practice in supporting student success (i.e. are school counselors performing duties outside of their role not related to student success)?
- How effectively did preservice training prepare school counselors for their current role as a school counselor?

Demographics

Reporting the demographics of each participants indicates that the studied population shared some mutual characteristics. Following is a narrative of the similarities and differences among the participants. See Table 1 for a chart representation.

Participants

A total of six school participants participated in the interviews for this study. Three of the participants were school counselors and the remaining three participants were principals. The principals and school counselors were employed in 3 total schools. See Table 1. The principal and counselor of each three schools were interviewed, which totaled 6 participants. Two of the schools in which the participants were employed were in one school district, while the other school was in separate school district. The identities of the participants and the schools were masked. To ensure that the participants' identities and the schools remained anonymous, each participant and school was assigned a color. All of the participants presented their own unique school experiences. Following is a brief description of each participant.

Ms. Purple, a 34-year-old Black female, was the principal at the Purple-Pink School. The Purple-Pink School was a traditional high school, but according to their website also “gives students the opportunity to earn 60 college credits and an associate’s degree by the time they graduate high school. This was the first program of its kind in the state.” The Purple-Pink School also “offered advanced classes in AP Calculus, AP English Literature, AP English Language, AP Government, AP US History, AP World History, AP Seminar, Senior College Scholars, and Bard College Classes.”

Ms. Purple had been working as a school principal for 5 years. She had a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership and participated in principal leader programs and fellows. When asked what educational training, if any, helped informed her how to position school counselors, she stated that “this is a small one, but for my training [from a nonprofit organization that develops leaders for educational equity], I was trained as a special educator, and have always understood the importance of special education and understood that it’s particularly the principal’s job.” Ms. Purple associated special education as the main responsibilities for school counselors. This will be discussed in greater detail later. Ms. Purple was aware of ASCA.

Ms. Pink, a 35-year-old White female, was the 9th and 10th grade school counselor at the Purple Pick School. A Licensed Masters Social Worker works with the 11th and 12th grades. Ms. Pink earned her Master’s degree in Counseling from a Counseling Accredited Program and University. She will have 5 years as school counselor at the end of this year. She was also a Licensed Professional Counselor. Ms. Pink was aware of ASCA.

Ms. Orange, a 31-year-old White female, was the principal at Orange-Yellow School. The Orange-Yellow School was an alternative high school. According to their website, they are “one of the first non-traditional high schools of its kind in the state, specifically to support the

city's large population of students looking for the opportunity to earn rigorous high school credit at an accelerated rate while preparing for success in college and a career after earning a diploma." However, it appeared that most students who attend the school have been expelled from other local schools and have therefore been placed at the Orange-Yellow School.

Ms. Orange had been working as a school principal for 2 years. She had a Bachelor's degree that was not education. She had participated in a national program that trained their members in teaching. When asked what educational training, if any, helped inform her how to position counselors, she stated "my educational background, none at all." I think my previous experience before being a principal as a special education teacher and intervention coordinator" helped understand the role of the school counselor. Ms. Orange was not aware of ASCA.

Mr. Yellow, a Black male, was the school counselor at the Orange-Yellow School. He was the special education school counselor. The Orange-Yellow School also had a full-time school counselor is the general school counselor. The researcher chose not to interview that counselor because she was not employed by the actual school. While Mr. Yellow was employed full time with the school, while the other full-time counselor was employed by a national nonprofit organization that contracted with schools in helping to provide counseling support to the schools.

Mr. Yellow had been working as a school counselor since 2006. He clarified that he held various roles in the school system since he was in graduate school. He stated that he was a behavior interventionist, dean of students, and then transitioned in school counseling. He earned a Master's degree in Counseling from an Accredited Counseling Program and University. He was working on becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor. Mr. Yellow was aware of ASCA.

Ms. Blue, a 54-year-old Black female, was the principal at the Blue-Green School. She has a Master's in Education Administration. The Blue-Green, a middle school, was a public institution. According to their website, they "inspire all students to reach their highest level of academic success and responsibility with collaboration by all stakeholders in order to be successful in high school and beyond." Ms. Blue had been working as a school principal for a total of 12 years. When asked what educational training, if any, helped inform her how to position school counselors, she stated that "the biggest thing that informed me how to deal with counselors and what counselors are supposed to do was actually speaking." While she received no official training on how to position counselors, her previous experience as an Assistant Principal helped her understand the school counseling role. Ms. Blue was not aware of ASCA.

Ms. Green, a Black female, was the school counselor at the Blue-Green School. She had been working as a school counselor at this school for 5 years. She graduated with her Master's in 2009, so has worked as a counselor at other schools as well. She earned a Master's and Doctorate degree in Counseling from an Accredited Counseling Program and University. She was a Licensed Professional Counselor. Ms. Green was aware of ASCA.

Individual Interviews

Prior to summarizing the experiences of the participants, the researcher will present a few general observations that are, in the researcher's view, as important as the words that were spoken by the participants. The tenor of five of the participants started off quite comfortably. The interview with the other participant was not as comfortable initially because it was the researcher's first face-to-face encounter with the participant. The researcher was already familiar with most of the participants. As each interview progressed, even with the participant with whom the researcher had no prior contact, there was establishing and understanding of common

ground, “aha” or revelatory moments, and hope and desire that change in the counseling and education field would occur. The researcher anticipated hearing the real-life struggles of balancing the many school counseling responsibilities, along with other non-counseling duties assigned by school districts or leaders. The researcher was thrilled by the promise of findings. Themes that the researcher did not expect emerged, along with a clearer understanding of the school counselor role and ASCA alignment. The researcher felt that the questions included in the interview protocol had been crafted in a way that would extract the kinds of experiences that would shed a much-needed light on the alignment between ASCA and school counselors along with principal and school counselor training. While completing the first interview with the school counselor and principal, additional questions emerged. The researcher added those questions to the following interviews.

By the end of each interview, the mood had become very reflective. It was as if the process itself validated the desires of the participants to continue working in their field. The process seemed to bring hope that their roles would be understood, clarified, and transformed so that true change and success can occur. The speech of the participants was audible, as reflected in the transcription of each interview. There were some pauses that occurred during the interviews. Most of the pauses occurred while the participants read the appropriate and inappropriate activities of school counselors. Other pauses were attributed to calls or other issues at the schools while the interview was taking place.

All participants openly shared their experiences and thoughts. The counselor participant interviews were lengthier than the principal participants. The researcher believed this occurred because the school counselors were the participants who provided the hands-on, direct, and indirect services to the students, staff, and entire school community, and understand the impact

of their role more than any other school staff. There were variations in the three school counselor roles in their experiences. Based on their responses, the researcher asked further questions and/or reflected responses when additional data emerged.

Observations and Logs

The observations and logs of each counselor participant varied for each school. Overall, the observations and logs supported that data that emerged from the interviews. The observations and logs reinforced the current activities of practicing school counselors, multiple responsibilities of school counselors and large caseload number, and capacity. The researcher observed all school counselor participants and received logs from all but one of the school counselor participants. This section details the observations and logs.

Ms. Pink was the counselor for all 9th and 10th grade students. She was obligated to provide weekly minutes to special education students. While Ms. Pink had a predetermined schedule indicating individual and group sessions, along with other duties and responsibilities, her schedule changes from day to day. Despite consistent follow-up and reminders about the logs, the researcher was unable to collect logs from the participant.

When the researcher observed Ms. Pink, it was a day after the school reopened following an online threat. Due to the online threat against the student(s) and school, the school reported the threat to proper authorities who deemed it necessary to close the school for one day. Upon returning to school after the threat, Ms. Pink readjusted her schedule. She had an open-door policy that day. The researcher observed Ms. Pink for 3 hours. Her day was as follows:

Upon student arrival, staff and students met in the gym to discuss the threat and security updates. Following the meeting, counselor met with school mental health staff, which included the social worker intern, school social worker, and school psychologist. Discussed the threat, safety, policies, other school threats and shootings, etc. While meeting with team, students and teachers began stopping by. While team in room, student came by to show counselor papers from court and discuss court issues. Another student

also came by to give counselor updated custody papers and talk to counselor. Counselor began discussing and looking up mentoring programs for student with court issues. Counselor called a guardian as well. Counselor also researched LAA1 to determine if students who receive the certifications in place of high school diploma can pursue community college or 4-year university. After students left, counselor consulted with team about student dealing with the custody situation. Stated would have to inform certain school personnel about update so school can know who can and cannot come to the school. After the meeting, counselor went to the front office to inform appropriate school personnel about the custody update. While returning to her room (office), a student in the front office also returned to counselor's room. Four to five other students, including student dealing with court issues who was in the room earlier, came to counselor's office. Remained in the room 1-2 hours. Discussed various issues, including school threat, schools in general, safety, teachers, etc. While those students were in the room, other students and teachers also stopped by. Counselor was in communication via text with students who has been in her room for a while. Counselor's room is spacious with a sofa and chairs. After the 4-5 students had been in the room for a while, counselor sat or stood by each student, and each student returned to class. The lunch bell rung about 10 minutes later. The school had a shortened schedule on the day the researcher observed. The school always has a shortened scheduled on that week day. So, lunch was earlier than the other days. The counselor went to the lunch room and observed during most of the lunch. After the lunch, the counselor left to attend a workshop.

When the researcher observed Mr. Yellow, it was a day in which the school planned a school wide field trip to the movies. The researcher observed Mr. Yellow for 5 hours. His day was as follows:

Prior to leaving for the movies, Mr. Yellow completed morning duty as the students entered school. Mr. Yellow stood at the student entrance with the culture team as they greeted and checked students and their bags. The students remained in the cafeteria for at least 15-20 minutes until they departed from the movies. Mr. Yellow, along with other school staff, helped students load buses according to their advisory groups. Mr. Yellow rode on the bus with the students. While at the movies, Mr. Yellow helped the culture team in observing students and the environment as they entered the movies, purchased food, and eventually took their seats. Mr. Yellow assisted culture team and waited until all students were seated in the theater before he sat. When the movie ended, Mr. Yellow assisted in the observation and safety of the students as they left the movies and returned to school. Upon returning to school, the school had lunch and other activities planned that related to the movies. Some students left school for the day, and some students stayed at school. Mr. Yellow met with some students, and then talked to other staff members. The researcher did not observe Mr. Yellow for the entire day. But the researcher was aware that the school also had open house from 5 pm – 7pm. Mr. Yellow was obligated to participate in open house.

Mr. Yellow printed out his schedule and provider events for the researcher. Although the researcher created a daily log in which the counselor could track their activities, Mr. Yellow's school used a system in which they keep track of their activities. The schedule tracked the same tasks as the log created by the researcher. Since Mr. Yellow was the special education counselor, he was required to see students identified with special educations on a weekly basis and had standing appointments for his students. The researcher blacked out the names of the students, so that the students would remain unknown. His schedule includes morning meetings, morning duties, and individual and group sessions. The printout of Mr. Yellow's provider events details the same activities as the schedule, but also includes administrative tasks, class wide interventions, student advisory, and lunch, along with the date, start times, and duration of the activities. The provider event detailed activities the counselor completed from February 1, 2018 to February 28, 2018. See Appendix C.

The researcher observed Ms. Green for 4 hours. The day in which the researcher observed Ms. Green was a day in which there was whole school practice testing. Her day was as follows:

Ms. Green arrived to work at 7:30 am. The researcher began observing Ms. Green at 8am. When the researcher walked in Ms. Green's office, she was meeting with a student. After meeting with the student, Ms. Green informed the researcher that two students were unexpectedly brought into her office due to issues that had occurred in their families. The school dean then entered the counselor's office to meet. The meeting was not scheduled. The dean stated that she needed to speak with the counselor about academic accommodations for a student. Not long after meeting with the dean, another student, who the counselor was not scheduled to meet, walked into the counselor's office. The student counseling held a session with the student. Not long after that session, the counselor received a phone call. While on the phone, the counselor received two other phone calls. The counselor stayed on the first call and noted to the observer that she would call the others back. Upon finishing the call, the counselor was unable to call the other callers back because a student walked into her office. When the student walked in, the counselor also received an email notification. The teacher of the student who walked into the counselor's office emailed the counselor about issues with the student's behavior. After meeting with that student, the counselor then received an additional phone call and

other emails that were urgent. After the call, the counselor stated to the observer that although practice testing was happening, issues occur in which the counselor must multitask, adapt, be flexible, and work to put out fires.

Ms. Green's school also used a system in which they keep track of their activities. Ms. Green printed out provider events, which documents the same activities of the log the researcher created. The provider events list activities from August, September, and October 2017. The provider events detail administrative tasks, such as calls, notes, consultations, planning, documentation, presentations, and individual and group sessions. Ms. Green also provided the researcher with provider services for the months of August to December 2017. The provider services list students by name, the date the services were provided, and the total number of minutes for each service. The researcher blacked out the names of the students so that the students can remain unknown. On this list, under student name, there were some instances in which it stated, "student not enrolled." Ms. Green informed the researcher that "student not enrolled" was the label for class presentations. This label allowed the counselor to bill for services. Ms. Green also gave the researcher a printout of the provider time for the months of August 2017 to March 2018. The provider list details how much time the counselor spends with students, on events, and total working hours. See Appendix D.

Data Analysis

Upon completing, collecting, and transcribing the data, audio recordings were transcribed by a transcriptionist and returned to participants for their review and approval. The researcher immersed in several readings of the data. The transcribed data was organized by the questions that were asked to the participants during the interview process. The researcher then searched for relevant quotes from the interviews and looked for significant, non-repetitive statements. This process is known as horizontalization (Mariwilda, 2015). Through this process, the researcher

identified themes. The researcher then used two separate qualitative data analyses to validate and discover more themes. The text analysis tools were MAXQDA and Lexicool. MAXQDA is a software program designed for computer-assisted qualitative and mixed methods data. Lexicool is an online text analysis that prompted me to analyze text via www.textalyser.net. To analyze each interview syntax, the software and analysis tools used vivo coding. It also decoded the data by determining keywords and phrases that were common among the participants. Keywords and phrases appeared in a graphical representation of frequency, which were analyzed and encoded with suitable category labels. Throughout each coding process, commonalities developed. The researcher journaled memos of patterns and themes that occurred in the data for later reference. Once codes were categorized, they were compared to one another.

The researcher then used a second cycle pattern coding method to recognize similarly coded data and further summarize it into sub-categories or to consolidate the data. Data had been categorized into subthemes. The subthemes were clustered into closely related themes. The researcher used the axial coding method to further select single categories as the central phenomenon. The subthemes were clustered into four primary themes. The researcher analyzed results from the first two stages to determine how the new categories and sub-categories interconnected with one another. The journal memos from the researcher, along with the research findings, were again reviewed. Then data was sent to one peer reviewer. Finally, themes, findings, and memo references were described as they related to the implications of the study.

Emerging Themes

Four major themes emerged from the data that were strong and comprehensive in answering the research questions. The experiences of the school counselors and principals were consistent and intertwined throughout the emerging themes. There was a connection between the

literature reviewed and the themes that emerged from the data. The four major themes identified from the six interviews include (1) Current School Counselor Roles and Responsibilities (2) Issues impacting the School Counseling Role (3) Education and Training and (4) Views about ASCA and Current and Practicing School Counseling Activities. To provide framework for the study, the researcher used participants' emotional and knowledgeable experiences as school counselors and principals to communicate the strength with which the data for this study was collected, analyzed, and ultimately reported.

The first theme, Current School Counselor Roles and Responsibilities, contains the following micro themes: (1) Counseling Activities, which describes direct and indirect services relating to actual counseling tasks and (2) Non-counseling Activities, which describes duties non-counseling related tasks or duties identified as inappropriate activities for school counselors.

The second major theme, Issues impacting the School Counselor Role, contains the following micro themes: (1) Caseload Number (2) Multiple Responsibilities and Capacity (3) Understanding of the School Counseling Role (4) The Counseling Team (5) Demographics/Setting of the Schools and Population/Dynamics of the Students and (6) Principal-Counselor Relationship.

The third major theme, Education and Training, contains the following micro themes: (1) Hands-on Training, which describes training participants stated they needed, but was learned on the job, (2) Coursework, which describes courses participants have taken along with their views on courses, internships, and professional development needed.

The fourth major theme, Views about ASCA and Current and Practicing School Counseling Activities, contains the following micro theme: (1) National ASCA Activities vs.

Local Issues: Change is Needed. The researcher experienced the “aha” moment as the subtheme emerged from the interviews.

Each of the macro themes and equivalent micro themes were explored in detailed using the data collected during interviews to illustrate each. In the transcripts of discussions between the school counselors and principals, an intense picture developed to greater understand the school counselor role. Each story brings awareness to the change that is needed in the role of practicing school counselors, along with changes that are needed in school counselor and principal training. Although ASCA outlines appropriate activities of school counselors, the stories bring an awareness and appeal other factors and variables need to be considered when crafting appropriate school counselor activities.

Current School Counselor Roles and Responsibilities

Counseling Activities

The participants in this study discussed and identified school counseling and non-school counseling activities as it relates to their experiences and school environment. The counselor participants and principal participants each discussed their own views and experiences to identify counseling and non-counseling activities. The researcher asked the counselor participants to define their current job description and read the one-page handout by ASCA that outlines inappropriate and appropriate activities of school counselors. Likewise, the researcher also asked the principal participants to read the one-page handout by ASCA in addition to identifying the main responsibilities of the school counselor. The following is Ms. Purple’s, a principal participant, response about the main responsibilities of school counselors:

The real-life roles. The core responsibility is the counseling work, particularly minutes for students with IEPs. Across counselors and social workers, even though it’s meant to be more of a social work role, connecting with external agencies and making sure that particularly our students without IEPs, are able to also get, not, obviously, wraparound

services because we're not even close, but to get additional services as needed, depending on either immediate life situations or other internalizing or externalizing behaviors we're seeing at school. By default, our counselors and social workers end up doing a lot with attendance, which is not necessarily the place where that should live, but does. They also do a fair bit of work with programming, so thinking through, knowing IEPs better than many outside of the case managers, understanding what the programs themselves need to look like.

[phone call interruption]

They understand programs more, so actually do weigh in on like schedules and the quality of the program, like the BSP program and BFS program as needed.

The researcher asked Ms. Purple if the school counselor's job description aligned with the proper framework for ASCA. Her response was as following:

For the most part, I would say the things I named, I'm thinking about academic program planning, we don't talk as much about the achievement tests and things like that. Actually, interestingly, the tardies kind of does that. It should be more the counseling side and less the tracking side of the house. Appropriate school dress. I don't think we do a horrible job of it, but I definitely think there are some blurred lines around some of the discipline pieces, partially because we are always at capacity, and partially because once you have that relationship, it's hard to disengage. But generally speaking, we don't ask them to do any data entry for the most part. Nobody assists me in the principal's office. They're not required to run classrooms, things like that. The only thing I would say that they do outside of that would be they are responsible for a testing group, on all hands on deck days. So yeah, I would say generally speaking decently aligned. Go us!

The following response was from school counselor at Ms. Purple's school, Ms. Pink, when asked about her current job description:

My current job description. Right now I work with 9th and 10th grade in a high school. So I see all students that have special education minutes for counseling on their IEP is my base caseload. In addition to that, I deal with crises as they come up, any mental crisis, collaborate with outside mental health professionals, have a few kids that I do regular check-ins with that do not receive special education minutes. Deal with attendance, collaborate with our school psychologist for functional behavior assessments, behavior plans, and pretty much just pop into classrooms. I support teachers as well. I don't do classroom guidance or any sort of whole group lessons within the classroom, but pushing to support kids on my caseload or give feedback to teachers.

The researcher asked Ms. Pink to compare her job description to the duties as outlined by ASCA. In her initial response, she discussed the appropriate activities outlined by ASCA. Her response was the following:

I think it does to the extent of everything on here I do except for the academic program planning. That is not something that I really deal with. We don't do much interpreting of any testing, cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests because our school psychologist does all of that. I read all the evaluations and actually utilize a lot of that when it comes to my planning for students who have IEPs because I find a lot of information in the evals, but I wouldn't particularly be doing those tests. I don't do school counseling core curriculum lessons. For the GPA and relationship to achievement, I would say that I spend some time doing that in the context of our RTI meetings. So within those meetings that myself, our school psychologist, SpEd coordinator, assistant principals, nurse attend, we do look at at-risk kids in that, but as an overall, I don't look at an entire school of things, but I do it a lot with my own students that I have. I definitely think everything else--advocate for students at IEPs, yes, that student records are maintained, mine, anyway yes, individual group, yes, interpreting student records, I'm not totally sure what that means, but I don't think I really look at student records because that would go to our main office. Our data manager is really in charge of getting records and then figuring out credits and classes.

The following was Ms. Orange's, a principal participant, response about the main responsibilities of the school counselor:

So our special education counselor is really primarily focused on fulfilling the IEP service minutes for kids that have counseling minutes on their IEP. For us, the vast majority of those kids have individual counseling minutes, though we've transitioned a bit to make it more possible for some of them to also have group counseling support as well. That's really the primary function. That, of course, to me, includes not just the direct counseling with the student, but also the documentation that needs to happen and tracking the follow-up with families, the collaboration with other staff in the building, etc. Then that also includes being a member of IEP teams and IEP team meetings. Then, of course, as every position is within a school, filling in other gaps as they come up, whether it's having intervention conversations with students or giving feedback to teachers and other colleagues about how to better interact with students, that's the basic description for that role. The other role that we have is intended to focus more on both the Tier 1 supports for students as well as the crisis intervention pieces because the special ed counselor role is a little bit more prescriptive and scheduled in terms of kid-specific minutes, it requires really that the other role be able to both plan school-wide or bigger picture events and supports for students, and then also to be available for more in-the-moment crisis management.

The following was Ms. Orange's response to the appropriate and inappropriate activities outlined by ASCA:

So on first glance, I think by and large, our counselors are doing the things in the appropriate activities column and may sometimes be doing some things in the inappropriate activity column also. So one example that stands out to me is the providing long-standing counseling and therapy in schools for psychological disorders, given what we know about the lack of mental health care in the city, I do think that sometimes that ends up happening with students. I think that the clerical and student records piece, our counselors are certainly not working with implement and registration paperwork, as far as I know, they're keeping records that have to do with the mental health work with students, but not... Not much beyond that, unless of course it has to do with other services that are provided, like homework services and things like that. I'm sure there's extra paperwork there. Those are the ones that stand out to me the most.

When the researcher asked Mr. Yellow to describe his job description, he stated that he was the special education counselor. The dialogue between the participant and researcher is shown below:

So what is your current job description?

Here?

Yes.

I am the special education counselor.

Has that description been similar in other school settings? I mean, you said that though, but it's been kind of similar in other schools that you worked?

As the behavior interventionist, I worked more with special education students, primarily those dealing with BD, or have the BD diagnosis. As a dean of students I had a familiarization working with students who had IEPs, because of the role and position I was in, I sat in a lot of their IEP meetings, but primarily just being a disciplinarian of the school, and approaching discipline not from a punitive perspective, but more of a restorative and social skill perspective. Having a counseling background enabled me to be effective in that manner. Like, I hate to say like, but when I think in terms of where we've transitioned to now, where we're incorporating mental health into the discipline aspect of high school or middle school discipline, I was already in that, I was in that position, but using the dynamics or the skill set that I had of counseling to be where we are now. So I was a little bit ahead of the game or the learning curve.

With your job now in SpEd, your job is to work with all the special education students?

Correct, primarily. I still see general education students, but primarily special education students.

So you have to provide minutes, you have to be part of the IEP meetings?

Correct.

And what are the other responsibilities that goes along with that?

It entails communicating with parents, possibly doing home visits, some social work aspects, but I get to primarily focus on providing the mental health services.

The researcher asked Mr. Yellow to compare his job description to that one-page ASCA document that outlined the appropriate and inappropriate activities. The dialogue between the participant and the researcher was as follows:

I'm going to give you a handout, which you probably already know, the appropriate school counselor activities from ASCA, and the inappropriate school counselor activities. If you were to look at that, do you think your job description aligns with the ASCA framework?

So ASCA approved on the left and...

Yeah, they identify what's appropriate for school counselors and what's inappropriate.

[mumbles something about reading it]

And we're talking about in my current role?

Uh huh.

I fall more along the ASCA approved activities for school counselors. There are some minor involvement in what is considered inappropriate school activities. I always have to kind of weigh those activities out, like the good of the school versus the role that I'm in. Sometimes we're short staffed and necessitates...

The following was Ms. Blue's, a principal participant, response when asked to identify the main responsibilities of the school counselor:

Basically to counsel the children. To be with the children and make sure their mental health is where it needs to be. And also to provide the child and the family with resources outside of the school building that will assist them in their quest for mental health. Or emotional health.

Ms. Blue also stated the following:

The school counselor for me is the go-to person when students are having emotional conflict. I know that there are things that the counselor has to do as far as making sure that their educational plan is set and whatnot, and those are things that are set by the district, but for me I feel like the counselors and the social workers work with the special education students, are there primarily for the students, and they need to make sure that the mental health of the students are appropriate when they're in times of crisis. The follow the researcher asked the participant to compare her school counselor's job

description to the activities outlined by ASCA. Following was the dialogue:

So I want to give you something. This is a paper that the American School Counseling Association describes as appropriate activities and inappropriate activities for school counselors. If you were to look at it, do you think your current school counselor job description aligns with some of the duties on here?

[interruption]

I agree with that.

Appropriate? Okay. [pause] So you don't agree with inappropriate so far.

Yeah. Now there are some things. If, say for instance, *Ms. Green* and I worked in tandem this school year. We had some over-age kids, a handful of over-age kids this year that were interested in getting into the right grade. You know the right grade where you actually make at the grade you're supposed to be at according to your age. We put them under contract and we detailed the specifications for the contract. She and I came up with that. You have to maintain a C average, things that we wanted them to work on. I think maybe all but one actually provided that contract, so in talking about maintaining student records for things of that nature, to push them to the next level, but not maintaining student records, you know the secretarial duties. No supervising classrooms. No clerical records.

It seems like so far the school counselor here does what ASCA, the American School Counseling Association, dictates.

Yeah. She pretty much does. She doesn't do any of these things that—now she does serve on the SBLC committee, which is to look at students who are having discipline problems and/or are being vetted for special education services, so she does assist with that. But that again, I feel she is a crucial element in that child possibly moving into a different program and things of that nature.

Following was the dialogue between the researcher and participant when the participant was asked about her current job description:

What is your current job description?

At this particular point, I am what is called an early interventionist counselor. So basically, the early interventionist counselor in the school district that I'm in, we

primarily focus on the mental health of the students. It's not written up for us to do anything academically for the kids, we're just supposed to create a caseload, work with the kids who have mental health issues that have been identified in the schools, we're supposed to have sessions with those kids, we're supposed to map out a plan, to implement things in class for those kids, and then whatever else is needed in the school setting.

Has that description been similar in other schools that you worked in?

No it has not.

How were the other ones that you worked?

The other schools, I had a stronger academic piece in the other schools. I was allowed to do mental health because I was the only person that was a mental health professional on staff, but the academic piece was needed, so I did grades, I did scheduling, I've done programming, like event programming for the schools to make sure that people came in and spoke about life skills and things of that nature. I've also done planning for college tours for the kids. I was at a high school and I was the ninth, tenth grade counselor, so just making sure that the ninth graders have introduction to all those things. That's what I did in the previous position. This one has more of a mental health focus, but it doesn't matter. It still had its academic pieces that I'd deal with.

The researcher asked the participant to compare her job description to the activities outlined by ASCA. The following dialogue included the participant's response:

ASCA has defined appropriate and inappropriate activities for school counselors. If you look at it, does your job description align with the ASCA framework?

My written job description doesn't, but what I do does.

So you're operating to do what you think is best for the kids, even though your written job description...

Yes.

The responses from all participants, along with the logs of the school counselor participants, illustrated that counselors engage in various tasks that can vary from day to day. Specifically, with counseling duties, school counselors provided direct services, which can be individual, group, classroom, meetings, or school-wide events such as bullying prevention. School counselors provided services to the entire school population, but as seen by Mr. Yellow and Ms. Pink, school counselors also had an obligation to provide weekly sessions to students who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and who have been identified as special education

students. School counselors must take time to create notes and document their services, which includes documenting billable services. As evidenced in the interviewee responses and counselor logs, counseling activities also included the facilitation of wraparound services, collaboration with outside stakeholders, and crisis intervention and prevention.

Non-Counseling Activities

Through the interviews and counselor logs, participants identified and discussed non-counseling activities that are provided by the school counselors. In the previous section, responses of participants were shown in which they discussed their experiences and views of the school counselor job description, along with how it aligns to the ASCA framework. The responses in the previous section also stated some of the non-counseling activities in which the school counselors are engaged. Ms. Purple and Ms. Pink both stated that attendance management is a task that the school counselors complete at their school. Instead of just counseling tardy students as outlined by ASCA, the school counselors track attendance as well. Additionally, ASCA identified testing as an inappropriate school counseling activity. However, Mr. Yellow, Ms. Green, and Ms. Purple stated that school counselors help with testing.

ASCA also identified teaching classes when teachers are absent and performing disciplinary actions or assigning discipline consequences as inappropriate tasks for school counselors. Likewise, keeping clerical records and maintaining student records were also identified as non-counseling or inappropriate task for counselors. Mr. Yellow stated:

Sometimes we're short staffed and necessitates...

So which ones would you say are the ones that you have to think about and weigh it out? The ones you have to think about. The inappropriate activities that you sometimes have to...

Performing disciplinary actions, those are rare moments because we are a small high school. There are days that some of the staff is absent, then everybody in the school does

not necessarily have a strong personality to engage with the students. Sometimes teaching classes when teachers are absent. Sometimes maintaining school records.

And it's the records not related to the SpEd?

Well I have to maintain the SpEd records, but sometimes I have to assist in... It's not often, but it does happen. Supervising classrooms and common areas, so I have hall duty, I have bus duty, I have lunch duty.

When the researcher initially asked Ms. Green about the inappropriate or non-counseling tasks, such as clerical, teaching classes, coordinating paperwork, inputting GPAs, scheduling, and student records, she stated that she had performed it frequently in previous years, but not so much this year. However, later in the interview, Ms. Green stated the following:

They send me everything. Everything. Even the phone calls. Sometimes when the principal isn't here, when the front office doesn't know what to do with the phone calls the call ends up here, just miraculously. So then I'm on the phone because good customer service dictates that I handle whatever comes to my offices. That's a professional anywhere. So I have to deal with whatever's on the phone, try to coordinate it, then whatever else is going on, deal with that, then try to remind the principal of what I did, or just let them know what I did via email if they're not here for whatever reason.

In another part in the interview, Ms. Green also stated the following:

Most of my day, when I'm working on a task, I'm stopped to ask to do other things that's not counseling-related, that's not ASCA-related. Like this morning, teachers were sending emails because they wanted a child to be put on an academic contract. Well the reality is, academic contracts are going to have to be in a new year for children from promotion. There is no time for that child to be on an academic contract. But I explained that to them. I'm sitting up here responding to emails, we're going back and forth with emails, that's an academic piece there.

And that's not what you're supposed to be...

That's not what I'm supposed to be doing, but as you put it here, and you try to tie it in with the behavior, the issue is not the behavior, the issue is the academic piece, plus they have a behavior interventionist. That's not what I'm here for.

Ms. Green's statement also identified an additional non-counseling or inappropriate task, behavior intervention or discipline. The researcher reflected that although Ms. Green's school has a behavior intervention, it seems that she is put in situations. Her response was as follows:

Because of my amount of experience, it's a very fine line. I do not discipline these children in any way. I will not, it's not a part of my job. But what happens is discipline cases end up in my office without clarity, so I'm when working with a child on feelings, and the confusion comes in as to why I have not corrected the child. I have to explain that that is not what I do. You can send a child down here, but that doesn't mean that I'm going to be correcting their behavior. I'm going to talk to the child about the behavior, we're going to see where we can plug in some positive interventions where we can do something different. You have the opportunity to come get me and speak to me before you do something wrong, but that's all I offer. I don't offer correction in the manner of discipline.

ASCA also identified providing long-term therapy or counseling in schools as an inappropriate task. Ms. Pink stated that she provides long term therapy. She stated the following:

Maybe just provide therapy long term just because of the IEP and it's so hard, most of the time kids keep that as a related service. Other than that, no, I do not have to do any of those things. I don't do any disciplinary actions, I don't have to assign consequences. No.

As illustrated in the responses by the participants, school counselors engage in non-counseling and inappropriate activities. While some participants participate in the inappropriate activities more frequently, all participants identified testing in a non-counseling activity. The remaining main non-counseling or inappropriate activities identified were attendance management, duty, and clerical work. Disciplinary issues also emerged as an activity that borders on the school counselor role. Moreover, participants seemed to understand that working in a school environment requires them to participate in activities that are not deemed appropriate for school counselors.

Issues Impacting the School Counselor Role

Caseload Number

Through the interview process, observations, and counselor logs, caseloads were identified as one the issues that impact the role of the school counselor. Caseloads refer to the number of students assigned to the counselors or the number of students that counselors work with and provide services. Of caseloads, Ms. Blue stated the following:

I can't say that I exactly know, because there is no assigned caseload other than the counselor deals with the regular population, the social worker deals with the SpEd population. And that's how they separate. Now, since I've been here, and this is my first year in this school district and my first year at this school.

However, the following dialogue between the researcher and school counselor at Ms. Blue's stated otherwise. The Ms. Green, the school counselor candidly spoke with the researcher:

Do you think that's enough for the caseload here?

No. She's overloaded and I am as well.

So too many kids on a caseload.

I believe for this particular population, we just have an extraordinary amount of students who need help.

Ms. Orange also briefly discussed caseloads. When the researcher and participant discussed school counselor activities, caseloads were identified. In response to Ms. Orange's statement about responsibilities of school counselors, the researcher reflected that it seems counselors have many responsibilities, which includes a large caseload and way too many kids per counselor. Ms. Orange stated, "Absolutely. Yeah, I would definitely agree. I think that they're spread very very thin. As are many people in a school like ours, but I think that they definitely are as well."

Mr. Yellow, the school counselor, at Ms. Orange's school spoke the following of his caseload:

My initial caseload when I started this school year was I had 40 kids on my caseload. Now that has dwindled down to now 25. There's a period of time, but now we're in March, we're at the latter part of the school year, because of our transition there are two graduation periods within one school year, so a number of the kids who—I have a percentage of kids who graduated and transitioned off my caseload, and I have a number of kids who have, just because of attendance issues. Because of you know, they're forced to work two jobs and they can't struggle and try to make ends meet. Kids have various circumstances. I have kids who are homeless, who have to deal with choose between am I coming to work—I'm going to go work or I'm going to come to school. I'm supporting myself and I have to make ends meet. So when they're juggling with adult decisions like that, it impacts how I'm going to provide them their service. So even though they have the service, because of their absences, it's impacted my ability to provide that service to

them. When I think in terms of how the course of a potential week can go, and how time is manipulated—manipulated is a term but not necessarily the context—how you juggle or maneuver, that plays a part in it as well.

The school counselor further stated that:

We had a graduation in February, so that graduation... Had that graduation not taken place and I had to see all those kids throughout the school year, I would have 33 kids on my caseload. With that it would be difficult to complete all.

The theme of caseloads also emerged with Ms. Purple as Ms. Purple discussed the special education population in relation to all other counseling tasks. The researcher posed a question regarding all appropriate school counselor activities outlined by ASCA when considering the population of Ms. Purple's school. The dialogue was as follows:

I'm thinking of the SpEd population that you discussed, and all these appropriate activities that a counselor should be doing, but considering the population and the caseload, do you think it's possible for them to get all of these things done?

No, because the other side, that's not listed, it's not inappropriate, but it's also not on the list of appropriate activities, is the question of what do you do with all the students who are not special needs who need support. When I was talking about the 20%, that's like a drop in the bucket. And you know firsthand in our school, there are kids who actually, there is a trauma, lost a parent, and I would say that often trumps the other pieces. I think *Ms. Pink* in particular does a really good job of...like the top list, this is what the kids' program should look like, it's actually jarring how good she was at having read their IEPs and been like, nope, this has to be changed to do this, but I don't think we are there yet on insuring student records. No, she actually does a decent job of that. Providing teachers with suggestions for effective classroom management. Her day is not spent in a way that allows her to see xyz needs, or y thing needs to happen, or to start check-in/check-out systems and things like that.

Yeah, because so much is going on, and like you said, the caseload is high, the intensity of the levels of the issues that they're dealing with is increasing, so it's kind of hard to balance everything.

So it's like these are the things, not everything is able to happen given what you just described.

Ms. Purple also stated the following concerning caseload:

In a perfect world, I would imagine the ideal caseload of any one of our counselors would be maybe 20 kids to go really deep, to be able to focus in on that. I've never seen anything close to that. At our worst, we've had a counselor have 75 kids on a caseload, which is obscene, at our best maybe 40.

The school counselor at Ms. Purple's school, Ms. Pink, also discussed caseload. After the school counselor described her job description, the researcher reflected that the caseload seemed to outweigh the time. The dialogue concerning the caseload was as follows:

It sounds like the caseload you have far outweighs the time.

Yeah, and just in terms of what I would like to be able to spend more time doing. In terms of the kids that are on my caseload, I feel like the most beneficial thing for some of them is not necessarily those 30 minutes they have with me a week, is if I had more time to spend in the classroom with them or observing something or helping a teacher with something, because I think most of the time, the kids are great when they're with me. It's then that next aspect of how do I support them in the world out there?

Following was the dialogue between the researcher and participant:

Even thinking about two people per grade, I'm thinking about our proportion and that still sounds like a lot.

Yeah, it's like 300 students per person.

Multiple Responsibilities and Capacity

Through the interview process and observations, multiple responsibilities and capacity were identified as an issue that impacts the role of the school counselor. Multiple responsibilities and capacity referred to the number of services and tasks the school counselor can realistically perform. Of capacity and multiple responsibilities, Ms. Blue stated the following:

Counselors are bogged down in the minutiae of paper paper, paper on their kids, then yes. If they have to be the clerical back in their offices, especially high school counselors when you're trying to get those kids out of school and trying to get them, make sure they've done their applications for college and all that that kind of stuff, I think you can get bogged down, and they can be diverted from their primary duties. On the middle school level it's a little different because the expectations of movement are a little different. What we're trying to do is move them to the next level of high school and trying to encourage them to do what they need to do to pass their state assessments and that kind of thing. But we're also dealing with, the counselor also deals with many many many home issues. Many many social issues. For instance, we had a young lady who all of a sudden showed up to school looking like Cousin It. Are you familiar with Cousin It, the Munsters? Hair just right in the face. Teachers, myself, the counselor, we all came together and said she's trying to hide something. What is she trying to hide? I said *Ms. Green* I need you to talk to her and try to figure it out. So I talked to her, *Ms.*

Green talked to her, so now the hair has come off her face. It's just a team effort. I think on the high school level counselors don't get to do what they really need to do. I think it's better for counselors on the middle school level and I don't know—I've never been on the elementary school level so I don't know how many counselors they actually give to the elementary school level, but they're vastly needed there because the problems don't start in middle school, they start before then. So the children's mental health care needs to be there from day one.

Concerning capacity and multiple responsibilities, Ms. Green stated, "Most of my day, when I'm working on a task, I'm stopped to ask to do other things that's not counseling-related, that's not ASCA-related." Ms. Green further stated:

They send me everything. Everything. Even the phone calls. Sometimes when the principal isn't here, when the front office doesn't know what to do with the phone calls the call ends up here, just miraculously. So then I'm on the phone because good customer service dictates that I handle whatever comes to my offices. That's a professional anywhere. So I have to deal with whatever's on the phone, try to coordinate it, then whatever else is going on, deal with that, then try to remind the principal of what I did, or just let them know what I did via email if they're not here for whatever reason.

Concerning multiple tasks and capacity, Mr. Yellow stated:

Things can change drastically in the course of a day. A fight might break out and it throws the whole day off. Parents might show up unexpectedly and it throws the whole day off from what I have planned.

Of capacity and multiple tasks, when the researcher asked Ms. Orange to identify challenges she believed counselors face in effecting delivering services, she stated:

I don't think that it's any lack of skill or will, I think it's really a capacity issue, because of all of the compounded variables. So it's not just that the needs are more intense, it's that they're also mixed with other needs as well, and then interacting with other people who have high needs. So yeah I think that there are really significant challenges that come from within the school and outside of the school but impact us in the school as well.

Likewise, Ms. Purple explained:

Capacity, resources outside of capacity, so not just how much time they have but when you have x number of kids who have uniform facing demands or whatever resources you can use, I like to believe I don't fall into this, but access to power. Not only capacity

problems and not having resources, but if you don't have access to the decision-makers, you are also a lot more limited, and I can imagine all three of those things are frustrating.

Concerning capacity and many responsibilities, Ms. Pink stated:

There are so many small things that pop up and kids that just, even if they don't need a lengthy period of time, they need that 10-minute touchpoint. I think that makes it difficult to really feel like I can do certain interventions with kids because there's someone often knocking at the door just to say hello or tell me something. I think that sometimes makes it hard to do certain individual or group work that can be more sensitive for a student because it's hard to have that privacy.

Concerning capacity level and multiple responsibilities, the following was dialogue between the researcher and participant:

So all the other kids who may have issues, their needs aren't being met, nobody really knows what's going on, and school counselors can't really be effective as ASCA would want because there's no time for it.

You're not able to get to that larger population of kids. I think that is tough. That is something I know *Ms. Purple* wishes, because she wants the kids that are not just the special education kids to get services, and I agree because there are times that some of my special education kids don't necessarily really, not that they really need counseling minutes, they need somebody who's able to do a check in with them just make sure they're on track to be doing what they need to be doing, but they don't need counseling in the traditional sense of the word. Because of needing to do all those things, it makes it harder to try and get a group together or things like that.

Understanding the School Counselor Role

The theme of understanding the school counselor role also emerged from the interviews. This theme stressed that there is some uncertainty of the school counselor role and understanding of what school counselors should and should not perform. This theme differed from the themes of identifying counseling and non-counseling activities in that views and thoughts were shared in why school counselors engage some tasks or why there is uncertainty around the school counselor role. Below was the dialogue between the researcher and Ms. Pink concerning what may contribute to the lack of clarity or understanding of the school counseling role:

I know in some states it's required that they have an education background prior to becoming a counselor.

I know, and I think the charter school system, that wave has really changed how school social workers, school counselors and everything is done. I think the traditional public schools here have very strict rules about whether they'll hire a counselor or a social worker but in the charter school system, they don't, and especially the Purple-Pink School.

Yeah, and you can have a school counselor, hired, or you can be a counselor social worker.

Yeah.

And that has changed a lot, because like you said I remember it wasn't like that.

They're two very separate things. I think the graduate school trainings are very different between counseling and social work because I think counseling focuses more on technique and theory and the stuff that you have to do, and the fact that you have to do a year and a half before you were even allowed to do a practicum or internship and anything, you had to take pretty much every class and that was your last year you were doing that. I think that's slightly different where I think social workers do more policy and things like that, I think there's stuff from both programs. If you can combine the two, I think that would be the perfect program because there's things from both I that found really important, especially in this role.

Ms. Green also addressed the difference between school counselors and social workers. She stated as follows:

Everybody assumes that counselors and social workers do the same thing, and it's not like the counselors and the social workers have the issue, because the social workers understand that the counselors do different things. Something simple as CEUs, I have had coworkers who are LPCs, but we can't use none of the CEUs, so we have to go to our separate conferences because everything here, even though we have to attend all of the professional developments, we can't use any of it because it's geared toward social workers, and our boards have told us that this does not count. So when you try to advocate for that, it's hard to advocate when it's only nine or ten people. We sit in a lot of meetings and professional developments that don't have anything to do with us.

Concerning the school counseling role, Mr. Yellow stated, "I think the dynamics and the roles of a school counselor has drastically changed." He further explained:

The need for guidance counselors is there, but that doesn't supersede the need for emotional trauma care and all of the other mental health needs that you're going to do. When I initially started here, guidance counseling was the least on my plate. I still do

some aspects of guidance counseling here, it's just mainly with kids who are juniors and seniors on my caseload, I'm able to help them develop a pathway to success, of you will.

The researcher reflected that it seemed the participant experienced the need to evolve and change, including the role change. The participant responded "Absolutely, yes." While discussing professional developments, Ms. Blue also acknowledged the need of school staff to understand the school counseling role. She explained:

We don't have any PD here on site that's particularly focused on counseling. Maybe that's an idea we ought to do that. I tend to think that the teachers need to be aware. Now she gets an opportunity to present at meetings when she needs to, but the teachers need to be aware of the sensitivity of what's going on with some of the kids. You know you have some teachers, oh it's a free hour. I'll tell you this and this. I try to tell them that's against the law. That's against the FERPA and if it's medical, HIPPA, whatever. Some people just don't get it. As constant reminders, it might be a good idea that when we do meet, that those things are put out to the teachers so you're giving me ideas.

Also, you're reminding me of a study I was reading that some teachers are not aware of what counselors do, so oftentimes they think they're not doing anything, or they have nothing but time on their hands and they can do this or that.

That is every teacher I've ever met in my life. I told the teachers this the other day, we were in a meeting. I said, how can you say that your partner or some teacher on the third floor when you're on the second floor never does any work? How can you say that if you're doing what you're supposed to be doing working with those kids? Y'all are in class at the same time. We make up things about what jobs do what, and when and where and how. That's the tragedy of the culture of teaching. Yeah, they probably do that here. I've heard that before. Not here, but on a high school level. Y'all don't do anything, and I'm going in the back to see 'em, they're scuffling, trying to get those papers together, all these five-year plans. Oh my goodness! Oh my goodness. And so...

Regarding understanding the school counselor role, Ms. Green stated:

If people understood exactly what the role of the school counselor—I can't say it enough—if people truly understood, or cared enough to understand, the value of a school counselor and what a school counselor does, you would use them in the role in which they are assigned.

But the issue is that's not happening because people don't understand.

People don't understand and some people don't care to understand. That is the thing.

The following also illustrates the lack of understanding of the school counselor role and other responsibilities counselors must engage in:

Does the school understand that you have to go? Do they all understand that you have to go to this professional development?

If they did, I don't think, it's not a top priority. I don't get backlash from going, but then you get the little comments, oh I didn't think you was here.

Because you're not visible. They don't see you, so they don't think you're here.

Because you don't see me moving around except when it's time to do IEPs and except at the beginning of the year when I'm making my introductions, it was like, oh we don't see you so we don't know, but it's always something back here. Even yesterday, I had a whole family back here. There was no possible way to get out of this office, and most of my days are like that.

You're bringing me to mind a study that I read, it said a lot of teachers—teachers were surveyed and they said they didn't know what school counselors did because they didn't see them, but that doesn't mean they're not doing anything because, again, the miseducation, they don't know the extra role is supposed to be. So that plays a part in it.

Right.

The Counseling Team

The counseling team was a subtheme that was identified as an issue that impacts the school counselor role. All the participants stated that their schools had a counseling team. The middle school team consisted of one counselor and one social worker. The two high schools have two counselors and a psychologist who works in the network. Since the psychologist is for the entire school network, the psychologist provides services to all of the schools in the network. Participants also acknowledged that their counseling team still is not enough to provide meaningful impact to all students and the schools. Although there was a team, there were not enough members on the team to address and help all students and support school-wide issues. Following was the dialogue between the researcher and Ms. Green:

So you have a counseling team here?

It's me and a social worker.

Do you think that's enough for the caseload here?

No. She's overloaded and I am as well.

So too many kids on a caseload.

I believe for this particular population, we just have an extraordinary amount of students who need help.

Ms. Pink explained that although the team at her school may have more people on the team than most, they are all not in the building on the same day. She stated as follows:

There are a lot of kids if you're really going with RTI and you're a PBIS school like we're all supposed to be, that is a tier three and even a tier two intervention that a school psychologist isn't going to be able to come in and do. Most people don't have one in their school building all day.

The following was also a dialogue between the researcher and Ms. Pink concerning the school counseling team:

I heard you mention it would be hard to do all these activities that ASCA states so that makes me think how people are on the school counseling team and would having more people on the team be able to help divvy up responsibilities?

If there was another person, yeah.

But most schools typically don't have a full team of...

No, I think we're lucky in a sense that there's actually two of us here. We each have two grades, which is not something that any other school has. Every other school typically, the counselor or social worker is responsible for four grades, or five grades actually if it's in the primary. Poor primary people have kindergarten through fourth grade and then middle is fifth to eighth. So it's pretty atypical that there's two people at this school. This is the first year.

Even thinking about two people per grade, I'm thinking about our proportion and that still sounds like a lot.

Yeah, it's like 300 students per person.

The topic of the counseling team also emerged in the interview with Ms. Purple.

Although there was a social worker and counselor at her school every day, she stated that they had partnerships with others who help provide support to the students and schools. She also explained that due to the need of students at her school, others often have to take on the responsibility to build relationships with students to "cultivate relationships with the kids where like you don't have to talk to a counselor." It was as follows:

I am excited about partnerships we're beginning to build and they're offering another layer of support and again, not wraparound services, but there more kids are being seen and actually have it be useful. If we're able to have that and have also in-house somebody who's pulling the strings to make sure the whole picture is being seen. Again, I think *Ms. Pink* does a really good job of trying to do that, but also being direct service provider herself is pretty intense.

I'm finding that there needs to be more than a two-person team.

Yeah. Did I tell you that for the longest time *the Purple-Pink School* had one social worker?

Because what I'm finding is kids fly under the radar and then they appear, and even when kids do not appear, they're dealing with issues where they really need to talk to someone.

Exactly. Almost always, what works for us, but is incredibly hard is I as the principal, our vice principal, we all work to cultivate relationships with the kids where like you don't have to wait to talk to a counselor, but then sometimes I'm like, I don't know what to tell you because I'm not trained. It ends up being an overload.

Ms. Orange also discussed the counseling team at her school. Like Ms. Purple, she explained that her school also has other "folks" in addition to the team of two fulltime counselors at her school. Following is the dialogue explained why Ms. Orange believed that the counseling team should consist of more than two people.

And I heard you say this year is more structured. You felt the need last year that it needed to be more structured?

Yeah, so I think that with having two full-time counselors here as well as other part-time folks, we found the need to just make sure that there was time and space to be really streamlined about priorities and deadlines and compliance needs especially, because there are so many moving parts throughout the day, but we also know that at the end of the day, the compliance pieces have to happen for us to continue to do our work.

Likewise, Mr. Yellow also explained the need to have a team of more than two full time counselors at their school.

We have several that are part-time that comprise our mental health team. We have a facilitator for restorative circles, and we have two interns who work within our counseling department in addition to, we have a Hispanic-speaking counselor who is part-time, so all those individuals uniquely comprise our mental health team. Myself and my coworker, we're the two primaries, but we couldn't really provide the quality of care without that additional support.

Changes in the Demographics/Setting of the Schools and Population/Dynamics of the Students

An additional theme identified that impacted the school counselor role was the demographics, setting of the schools and/or population, and dynamic of the students. As the world continues to change, the study suggested that the counseling role must also continue to transition and adapt to the needs and issues of the students and environments. Specifically, needs of the school, grief and trauma concerning shooting and violence in the city of the school environments, and race and class emerged as student and school variables that can impact the school counselor role. When the researcher asked Ms. Orange to identify challenges school counselors may face in effectively delivering services, she stated as follows:

So it's not just that the needs are more intense, it's that they're also mixed with other needs as well, and then interacting with other people who have high needs. So yeah I think that there are really significant challenges that come from within the school and outside of the school but impact us in the school as well.

Concerning the population and demographic of the students and school, Ms. Orange also stated:

It's not that the needs are different here, it's just that the extremes are more extreme, and it's just concentrated. So what we might see academically or mental health-wise that other schools might reflect 5% of their population is 30% of our population or something. So the frequency is just higher, I think.

Likewise, Mr. Yellow explained that due to needs of the school, family counseling tends to take place. He explained:

I've provided a lot of family counseling here, which is kind of strange. Parent conferences become—it may start off as a parent conference, but before it ends, it has become family counseling. Basically it has become a session. Sometimes that's what necessary to heal or mend the conflict or wounds between the dynamics of the student and the parent or the dynamics of the student and the school. A lot of the issues that have been spilling over from home, spill over into the school, and they have no other recourse to address it other than here at the school where all those issues begin to play themselves out in a parent conference.

The researcher posed a question regarding the school's population compared to other schools.

The following dialogue illustrates the how the school's population and needs impact the school counselor's role:

So thinking about the population here, do you think the needs are greater if you were to compare to other schools that you have been in? Or the needs are just more intense?

I would say more intense, because we're such a small school, but we have, even though we're a school of choice and we are an academic alternative school. A lot of people get that confused, so I have to stress that we are an academic alternative school, but we still see the same issues regardless.

So the needs are kind of more intense.

Correct. We see students from all over the metropolitan area who, basically for whatever reasons, are no longer at those schools and they find themselves in circumstances that necessitate attending here.

Mr. Yellow also detailed how school shootings impact the role of the school counselors and the counseling profession.

So school counseling ten years ago, versus school counseling in the city after a previous natural disaster versus where we are moving in the next ten years, when I factor in the level of trauma in the community and nationally the rate of school shootings. We live in a pretty violent city, if you will, and the kids at our school are greatly impacted. We've had several students who attend school here who have been involved in shootings. Several students—or at least a handful of students—who have actually lost their lives as a result of being involved in shootings in the community. So all of that activity kind of spills over into our school, and it requires you to have a trauma-focused perspective. You used a term, not crisis management, but it comes to mind often as using it to describe, so I think in context of ASCA, this ideal or platform, if you will, and where we are involved in the city, it has to become more trauma-focused, as opposed to the current. We have to find some type of way—I know we provide grief counseling—but I know in terms of if we're going to be the best service providers and provide the best quality of care, we have to, in some way, shape, or form, be able to provide wraparound services and provide those services in the school setting where we're going to be able to see the kids.

I think in terms of some cities, there are some other outlying areas, but you understand, when I say large urban population, poor access to mental health treatment, and nine times out of ten, it's the demographics of an age category between 16 and 20 years of age. We kind of fit that same age in demographics, and this is what's going on in the community, and this is somewhat of a most underserved population.

Mr. Yellow further stated as follows:

“I have a percentage of kids who graduated and transitioned off my caseload, and I have a number of kids who I have, just because of attendance issues. Because as you know, they’re forced to work two jobs and they can’t struggle and try to make ends meet. Kids have various circumstances. I have kids who are homeless, who have to deal with choose between am I coming to work—I’m going to go work or I’m going to come to school. I’m supporting myself and I have to make ends meet. So when they’re juggling with adult decisions like that, it impacts how I’m going to provide them their service. So even though they have the service, because of their absences, it’s impacted my ability to provide that service to them.”

Ms. Purple identified the high special education population at her school. She further elaborated, “when you look at our school now, with 20% of our students with special needs, any other population that was nearly a quarter of your school, you would think differently about it. I think many schools. I’m not saying we’re perfect, I just see it as an outlier group.” Attendance issues also seemed to impact the dynamics of the school, which in turn impacts the school counselor role. Concerning attendance, Ms. Purple stated, “By default, our counselors and social workers end up doing a lot with attendance, which is not necessarily the place where that should live, but does.”

Similarly, to Mr. Yellow, Ms. Purple also identified trauma as an issue, which ultimately impacts the role of the school counselor. She explained as follows:

I guess also to talk about us as a country, right? The level of trauma in our kids is growing, right. The model might have worked. I mean, black people have had trauma forever, but the kinds of trauma. As the prison populations increase, as the murder rates increase, as poverty increases. I was reading this study where black people in America are roughly the same if not worse than they were... And I’m like of course we’re traumatized. It’s getting worse, so systems that might have worked, or structures or models, it’s not enough.

Ms. Purple even addressed how race and class influences the student population and dynamics of the school, which then results in impacting the role of school counselors and counseling profession. Mr. Yellow’s response concerning ASCA also highlighted how class of

the student population and school impacts the school counselor role. He explained the following about the population and dynamics of the school and students:

“Because as you know, they’re forced to work two jobs and they can’t. They struggle and try to make ends meet. Kids have various circumstances. I have kids who are homeless, who have to deal with choosing between am I coming to work-I’m going to work or I’m going to come to school. I’m supporting myself and I have to make ends meet. So when they’re juggling with adult decisions like that, it impacts how I’m going to provide them their service. So even though they have the service, because of their absences, it’s impacted my ability to provide that service to them. When I think in terms of how the course of a potential week can go, and how time is manipulated-manipulated is a term but not necessarily the context-how you juggle or maneuver, that plays a part as well.”

Concerning class and race, Ms. Purple stated:

There was a study I read that said black people who make it to the middle class, their children have x crazy percent, I don’t remember the exact percentage, percent chance of sliding back into abject poverty. So if I, I was poor, grew up in the ... project not that far away, if I have striven this hard to move my kids and my family to a place where they are totally middle class, but knowing despite that they could literally go right back? There’s a whole level of hopelessness around that that also needs tending. What does it mean as a parent? What does it mean as a society that I work really hard yet my world is still here compared to...

And how do we, as a country, because we have a conversation about mental health every time somebody shoots, or a white man shoots a school, to be more precise.

But nothing changes after that.

Ever. Where that’s a really specific change you can make. We’re going to invest in more counselors in all the schools.

Ms. Pink’s responses and statements supported the responses and statements of her principal, specifically regarding the special education population. Ms. Pink explained that many of the students on her caseload from the special education population. She stated, “I see all students that have special education minutes for counseling on their IEP is my base caseload.”

Ms. Pink further elaborated that due to the population of “being in such a high needs school”, she finds herself providing long-term counseling, an activity ASCA identified as inappropriate. She expressed as follows:

The one thing I would say, I do probably end up having to do long-term counseling because of the IEP stuff, just that so many students stay on that for so long, so that would be my one thing.

Ms. Pink addressed that the school has “a larger population of kids” in general, and it makes it difficult to complete all tasks. She also stated the following, “the problem is I feel like we’re losing a lot of students, too, especially our over-age kids.” Ms. Pink also hinted to the dynamics of the staff population. She explained that when the geometry teacher left, there was no one to fill the role. A staff member who was supposed to be the RTI Coordinator, who was also teaching three college and career classes, had to fill the geometry teacher role, especially when it became known that she was previously a math teacher.

Ms. Green also acknowledged the population and dynamics of her school. She stated, “I believe for this position, we just have an extraordinarily amount of students who need help.” She also stated that “these are different types of students.” Concerning the dynamics of the school, she stated, “It’s always something back here. Even yesterday, I had a whole family back here. There was no possible way to get out of this office, and most of my days are like that.” Similarly, Ms. Green’s principal, Ms. Blue, recognized the “different types of students” as identified by Ms. Green. Ms. Blue explained, “We had some over-age kids, a handful of over-age kids this year that were interested in getting into the right grade. You know the right grade where you actually in at the grade you’re supposed to be at according to your age.” Ms. Blue later stated, “But we’re also dealing with, the counselor also deals with many many many many home issues. Many many social issues.”

Principal-Counselor Relationship

The principal-counselor relationship also emerged as a subtheme that can impact the school counselor role. The relationship between the principal and counselor can have a positive

or negative impact on the role of the school counselor. The literature review discussed that when principals and counselors have a collaborative and working relationship, the relationship can have a positive impact on the school counselor role. Ms. Blue and Ms. Green seemed to have a relationship in which they effectively work together and communicate. Ms. Green's responses implied that she had a relationship with the principal in which she can explain her job description and duties. She explained, "The perk is nobody realizes that I'm working from a model. Until something comes up and it goes against what I am doing, and I explain and show them that it's against the way I work." The following dialogue illustrates the collaborative relationship between Ms. Green and Ms. Blue:

We had a young lady who all of a sudden showed up to school looking like Cousin It. Are you familiar with Cousin It, the Munsters? Hair just right in the face. Teachers, myself, the counselor, we all came together and said she's trying to hide something. What is she trying to hide? I said *Ms. Green* I need you to talk to her and try to figure it out. So I talked to her, *Ms. Green* talked to her, so now the hair has come off her face. It's just a team effort.

Concerning the relationship with the counselor, Ms. Blue also described it as follows:

The school counselor for me is the go-to person when students are having emotional conflict. I know that there are things that the counselor has to do as far as making sure that their educational plan is set and whatnot, and those are things that are set by the district, but for me I feel like the counselors and the social workers work with the special education students, are there primarily for the students, and they need to make sure that the mental health of the students are appropriate when they're in times of crisis.

Ms. Green also explained that although her school leader was the leader that she worked with every day, in her school's district, she was not evaluated by her school leader. She stated that she was instead evaluated by a director who is in central office. She further explained that the director's background was not in counseling, but in social work.

Ms. Purple and Pink also seemed to have a collaborative relationship. Specifically, with collaboration, Ms. Purple stated, “I think we collaborate well.” Following illustrated the dialogue between the researcher and Ms. Purple concerning the relationship with the school counselor.

And how do you work with the school counselor?

I’ll speak about the current school counselor. I am working to, because it’s relatively recent, meet biweekly to talk through any pressing things on the caseload, give any guidance and offer any support as needed around attendance and the like.

So do y’all work collaboratively—so y’all collaborate well together.

Yeah, I love her. I think it’s mutual. I think she’s able to come to me to get help when she needs it.

About her relationship with the school principal, Ms. Pink stated, “I will say, actually, for the most part at this school I think that our principal has an appreciation for what we do and recognizes the need for it and actually really wants more mental health services in the school.” Ms. Pink also hinted at the depth of the principal-counselor relationship. Although a principal may allow school counselors to operate in their role as they should, they still may not necessarily understand the scope of the school counseling role. Ms. Pink stated the following about a former principal:

I think my former principal, I wasn’t asked to do things that were beyond the scope of what I was supposed to do but she never really... There was less of a relationship about understanding what it was that I did. She would let me pretty much do what I did, but there would be times when teachers felt that they could say certain things or ask for certain stuff of me because there was no person above them saying that wasn’t my role.

Ms. Orange and Mr. Yellow’s relationship seemed to be different this year compared to previous years. It seemed that Ms. Orange believed that the role between herself and the school counselor had to shift to a more structured relationship or interaction. She stated as follows:

This year it’s more structured than it was previously, so in terms of routine interactions, we have a weekly counseling check-in with the mental health team and it’s led by one of our special education coordinators, and then the network’s mental health coordinator also attends. That’s really our opportunity to discuss on-going needs and proactive planning. Then additionally we, Leslie and I, work on SBLC—school-building level committee—

together weekly, and then of course there's far more non-planned interactions, which really come down to daily problem-solving around students and families and teachers and really them keeping me up-to-date on crisis management and other support that might be needed for individual and small groups of students.

So it sounds like y'all do work as a collaborative team and have a lot of communication.

Yep.

Education and Training

Hands-on

Education and Training was another major theme that emerged from the interviews. Both the counselors and principals acknowledged that training and development is lacking from each of their roles. Participants discussed on the job training they had to learn, coursework that either helped them or was not required or offered, and the need for specific professional developments. Participants explained that they learned on the job training for their roles. Ms. Orange was asked if there were any trainings or workshops in the network or school ground level that was offered to help her understand the school counselor role. She replied, "No. Not at all." Ms. Orange also explained:

I think my previous experience before being a principal as a special ed and intervention coordinator, certainly is not anywhere near having training as a mental health professional, but allowed me to at least see the overall scope of how a variety of types of intervention services can be coordinated together to meet students' needs and how they can be differentiated to meet needs at different levels and tiers throughout the school.

Likewise, Mr. Yellow acknowledged that he learned "on the job training" and "hands on" training regarding special education. Similarly, Ms. Green explained that in previous jobs, she "had to do SpEd and the regular counseling piece, and it was on-the-job training. It wasn't anything I learned in school."

Although Ms. Blue had an advanced degree that focused on leadership in education, she also stated that most of her knowledge and training concerning school counselors was on the job

training. She elaborated that most of her experience regarding counselors came from her previous position as an assistant principal. She stated, “I’ve never gone to a program or anything like that or a conference on counseling. Nothing.” Ms. Pink also discussed on the job training she had to learn about the school counseling role, specifically relating to special education. She indicated that she felt as if she was not fully prepared “for the real world” in her graduate training. Ms. Pink further explained that she did not know anything about the special education caseload in graduate school. When asked if she learned it in school she replied as follows:

God no. I don’t think anybody really learns... I don’t think any Masters program, unless it’s psych, really in a school program talks about... You learn a little about IDA and FBA and those sorts of things to the extent of actually hearing about how to write an IEP, what a ... should look like, any of those things.

[interruption]

I think that the SpEd side of things is not something, and you really need to, going into a school, I think the year before I started in a school I did outside mental health services and I worked in a lot of schools, so I had students who were identified as special education, so I was able to attend some IEP meetings and start to get a sense of what it all meant and I really made it a point to read these IEPs and evals, even though at the time I didn’t know I was going into a school. So at least my first year in a school I was a little bit aware, but I think you’re still kind of left with if you’re not motivated to just kind of figure things out on your own. My first year I spent so much time looking at IEPs and trying to figure out what they all meant and what should be in them and what was missing so now when I get an IEP or I look through it, I’m like, well this is wrong, this is wrong, this is wrong, and I think it’s just tough because with turnover in schools, it makes it really difficult to make sure that, you almost feel like, I just trained all of you teachers, and now they’re gone.

Ms. Purple also identified her training and education concerning the school counselor role. Like the other principal participants, it was more on the job training in addition to her special education experience. Ms. Purple explained as follows:

This is a small one, but for my training [from a nonprofit organization that develops leaders for educational equity], I was trained as a special educator, and have always understood the importance of special education and understood that it’s particularly the principal’s job, because when you look at our school now, with 20% of our students with special needs, any other population that was nearly a quarter of your school, you would think differently about it. I think many schools. I’m not saying we’re perfect, I just see it

as an outlier group. So special education helped me understand more, and ask more questions about like what does social work meant to look like in a school? Given the fact that there is often a deep connection.

[The nonprofit organization that develops leaders for educational equity] was my teacher training when I was just general SpEd, not a lot. I joined [a different nonprofit organization that trains school leaders] in 2009, and there were some trainings, like there was a, again more on the SpEd lane, everything a school needs to know not to get sued, I don't know what it was but it was something about special education law, but nothing explicitly about social workers and how they work and how you manage it.

Coursework

With regards to coursework, specifically, if and how her educational background helped to inform her how to effectively position school counselors, Ms. Blue stated “My educational background, none at all” informed her about the role and proper assignment of school counselors. She further explained:

I would be curious, to be honest, if those were really true PDs or more like meetings, because it's not the same thing, but I do know that part of the job description is around outside professional development and having the time built into their schedule for it, and then funding for it as well.

Ms. Orange was also asked if she thought trainings or workshops would have made a difference in her understanding of the school counselor role. She stated as follows:

Yes, absolutely. I think that's something that would be very impactful. I think that this is the case for not just counseling but for many things. I know what I know from experience and from what that I've seen, and sometimes that's great, but sometimes I think that can be limiting given that... I just think that can really limit your perspective on what's possible and what's best practice.

Concerning coursework, Mr. Yellow explained that although he could not remember, he had specific courses that focused only on school counseling. He explained that counseling has “several tracks.” Mr. Yellow enrolled in the school counseling track and marriage and family tracks. Mr. Yellow stated that he believed the school counseling track helped prepare him to enter the school counseling track. In his current role, Mr. Yellow stated that although he sees the “general education students, but primarily special education students.” The researcher reflected

to the participant that he must provide counseling minutes to the special education population since he has to participate in the IEP meetings. The researcher also asked the participant to think back when he was enrolled in his program to determine if any classes he had taken specifically focused on special education in the counseling program. He responded “no.” The following documents the conversation between the researcher and participant regarding counselors and special education training:

With SpEd, in school, if you think back, were you in any classes that specifically focused on special education in the counseling program?

No.

That’s what I’m finding, that a lot of counselors that are in schools, even if they’re not the SpEd counselor, they’re general counselors, but they have to provide SpEd minutes, but in the training in classes, there was never any SpEd classes.

That’s a good point you bring up. When I was in my Masters program, we followed primarily a guidance counselor perspective or paradigm. I think it was geared more towards, or at least my focus was, more towards middle school and high school counseling, and that’s the guidance counseling perspective. It wasn’t heavy on mental health counseling, per se. I kind of lucked up into—when I say lucked up, when I was studying school counseling, I just took mental health classes to be familiar as a marriage and family counselor. While I was in the marriage and family track at *H.C.*, I took mental health counseling classes. So that background has enabled me to be effective. They had the three tracks, they had the school counselor, they called it community counseling, but now they call it mental health counseling, and marriage and family counseling. So I took a lot of the chemical dependency classes, all those classes you would see, crisis intervention classes, all those dynamics that you would see in marriage and family track, but now it’s beneficial for me in the school setting.

Mr. Yellow also addressed his experiences and thoughts surrounding an increased need for mental health for school counselors. Concerning mental health, Mr. Yellow stated as follows:

It is of a necessity now. I think the dynamics and the roles of a school counselor has drastically changed. You really should narrow it down to just, if I was involved in curriculum design, I would require all school counselors to have some orientation or familiarization with mental health counseling per se, as opposed to or in addition to the school counseling orientation.

With regards to coursework, Ms. Blue stated: Concerning if and how her educational background helped to inform her how to effectively position school counselors, she stated as follows:

The biggest thing that informed me about how to deal with counselors and what counselors are supposed to do was actually speaking because many of the counselors, as an AP I was on the high school level, and many of the counselors got so bogged down in paperwork and pulling transcripts and making sure that students got from level A to level B, and some of that they need to do because the counselor keeps that information in the high school, but there was such a concern by those counselors that they were not actually touching the children. When you come in to every school of course you don't have all of that immediacy about transcripts and moving on. From that experience, I said counseling, I want you hands-on with the children, and I need you to be available to the children and the children have issues. What we have found here at this particular school is that the counselors are also hands-on with some of the adults, which is fine too. The mental health-building needs to stay up, and when that stays up, it helps. Anything that helps the child get through the day under some extraordinary circumstances, it's a team of us that have to make that happen.

After the interview ended, Ms. Blue discussed her thoughts surrounding principal training again. She shared that principals should participate in counseling 101 and finances trainings. Ms. Blue further explained her experience with school counselors. She stated that school counselors were "bogged down" with paperwork. She believed that districts need to explain to counselors why they ask them to complete administrative duties, and job duties in general. She used the phrase "glorified counselor." Ms. Blue explained that if counselors "just push paper", they cannot do duties as they should because they are being used as a "glorified counselor."

Like Mr. Yellow, Ms. Green explained that she had taken the school counseling track in school. She stated that she had also taken "cultural competency classes and reflections to deal with the school environment." She also described as follows:

We took a programming class to learn how to structure our counseling program within the school, and we took—it was one of the classes, I can't think of the name of it, but basically in this particular class they talked a little bit about how to do SLTs through different school districts because we had the professor made arrangements for school counselors from different school districts to come in to speak to us.

Ms. Green also discussed the professional development piece. She explained that counselors were required to complete Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Ms. Green explained that the school offers professional developments, and they are required to attend. However, the professional developments are “geared towards social workers, and our [counseling] boards have told us that this does not count.” Mr. Yellow also echoed Ms. Green’s response. He explained that the network does provide professional developments. However, he further elaborated

“We do a good job of finding other outside services providers, but the school itself, no. The network as a whole, yes. The network as a whole has a number of PDs. I would like them to become more specific. They’re general professional development, they’re not necessarily specific. When I say specific, autism is not necessarily a specialty for me, so I have to go outside in the private sector to actually find professional development on autism. Play therapy is not necessarily a specific area for me, so I have to go, to some degree, outside.

Like the other counselor participants, Ms. Pink also completed a school counseling class. However, unlike the other counselor participants, Ms. Pink completed the clinical track. She explained “there was one school counseling class and then other than that, if you were in that area, you could take, obviously, child and adolescent counseling group. I think the only one you had to take specifically if you were on the school track was the school and adolescent.”

Concerning coursework, Ms. Pink also stated as follows:

I know a lot of people who went on to private schools to do their internship did a lot of small group stuff, did classroom things, did whole school sort of stuff where that’s not really something I do. I don’t really remember. The class I remember the one thing they had us do was you had to make a guidance lesson that was a large group thing, but other than that I don’t remember being much. I feel like that’s all stuff you’re trained on the job for and I think that’s how it goes for everything. I don’t think most of my graduate school training prepared me for the world. It gave you the base skills, but I don’t think anyone, from what I know the only people trained in doing an FBA and a BIP while in graduate school are school psychologists. Social workers are not trained about doing that, you don’t know how to do that until you’re in the setting and asked to do it.

I think that’s a piece that’s missing when you think of the social worker and counseling programs, we’re asked to do those in schools because psychologists will do them as part of an eval process, but there are a lot of kids if you’re really going with RTI and you’re a

PBIS school like we're all supposed to be, that is a tier three and even a tier two intervention that a school psychologist isn't going to be able to come in and do.

Ms. Pink also discussed her thoughts and experiences concerning ASCA's stance about school counselors providing effective classroom management for teachers. While ASCA outlined that activity as an appropriate task, Ms. Pink articulated otherwise. She explained a lack of training and elaborated as follows:

I would like to be able to spend more time with helping teachers, but what's interesting to me though about effective classroom management, that's always confused me because I'm like, I'm not a classroom teacher, why would I know about classroom management. I can give feedback for certain interventions. But again that comes down to the school psychologist, I feel like are more—I don't know many mental health professionals who are great classroom managers necessarily. That's always been something that always felt to be a very different role than what I had.

Lastly, Ms. Pink stated that her school now provided professional development for counselors. She explained that when she initially started working at the network, "there wasn't a region team. Now in the last couple of years, that's become a bigger role and there are people hired at a regional level to make sure we actually have things to do on regional PD day." Ms. Purple, Ms. Pink's principal, stated that they do not provide professional development for their school counselors. The responses indicated that professional developments for school counselors were provided for the regional professional developments as an entire network, but not on the local school level.

Views about ASCA compared to Current and Practicing School Counseling Activities

National vs. Local: Change is Needed

Views concerning ASCA was the other major theme that emerged from the participant interviews. The counselor participants discussed their experiences and views in greater detail than the principal participants. It is also important to note that only one principal participant was aware of ASCA. While she knew what ASCA was, she was not familiar with the appropriate and

inappropriate counseling activities. Since the school counselors were the participants who actually provided the services and completed counseling and non-counseling tasks, their views and experiences regarding ASCA resulted in more detailed and comprehensive responses.

Ms. Green stated that although her written job description did not align with what ASCA crafted, what she did at her job aligned with ASCA. Ms. Green explained that in school district “everything’s geared towards social work, so they’re not familiar with the ASCA model.” She further explained that there were about 75 counselors and social workers in her school district. She stated, “Out of those 75 counselors and social workers, there’s only about nine of us that’s LPCs and there’s only two of us that’s LPC-S.” Given the fact that most people in the school district were unfamiliar with ASCA, that implied that practices of school counselors in Ms. Green’s school district are not aligned with ASCA. Ms. Green validated the researcher’s reflection and stated, “Not in this school district. You have to implement the ASCA model for yourself.” Ms. Green initially stated the following when asked her thoughts if she could follow ASCA guidelines concerning appropriate activities:

I think I would be able to have more of an impact on the kids. If everybody understood what I was supposed to be doing, not because I’m not telling them, but if people really understood and to a certain extent cared, what I would do, I would be able to implement more structural program, and I would have the freedom to do it. Most of my day, when I’m working on a task, I’m stopped to ask to do other things that’s not counseling-related, that’s not ASCA-related.

The researcher then asked the participant if she believed it would be practical to follow ASCA.

The conversation was as follows:

You said that if you were to follow ASCA, you think it would be better, but in reality, do you think it’s practical to follow what ASCA says?

I don’t think anything in the ASCA model is impractical in any school environment. They’re asking for you to do basic fundamental counseling things that are needed for the advancement of a student. If people understood exactly what the role of the school counselor—I can’t say it enough—if people truly understood, or cared enough to

understand, the value of a school counselor and what a school counselor does, you would use them in the role in which they are assigned.

But the issue is that's not happening because people don't understand.

People don't understand and some people don't care to understand. That is the thing.

And then I heard you say earlier, the caseload is just way too much. Even if you tried to do what ASCA says, the caseload between you and the other social worker is just too many kids.

At this point, even though the social worker deals with SpEd kids specifically, we rotate clients. We have to. Some days she has to be at another school and I'm the only one here. Some days I'm not here because I have to go out to get professional development. It is what it is. Half of my days when I'm not at work, it's not because I'm just all sick or something, I'm going to professional development, because if I don't go throughout the year, my license would be null and void. So throughout the course of the year, and even though I have to leave the school to go to professional development, I have to leave here. So we don't have any choice but to rotate things because it's more days sometimes than not throughout the month, at least three days out the month one of us is going to be back here by ourselves.

The results from the interview with Ms. Green indicated that although ASCA has not crafted unreasonable tasks, there were factors that contribute the alignment, or misalignment, in what ASCA has crafted compared to activities school counselors actually perform. Ms. Green's interview highlighted a previous theme about understanding the school counselor role. She believed the alignment between what school counselors actually do compared to what ASCA stated counselors should do is contributed to "miseducation" of the school counseling role. Ms. Green's interview also highlighted school counselor advocacy. While it would be ideal to advocate and educate others about the school counselor role, realistically it may not be that simple. Ms. Green stated:

If you don't have the support of your director or your higher-ups in advocating for yourself, I'm not going to sit you in the this building and tell my principal what I'm not going to do. If this lady asks me to come and sweep the floor, the floor will get swept, because I'm in their environment. Granted, she can say anything about my evaluation, but she's not evaluating me because the things I'm getting evaluated on, have a lot to do with [can't understand what she said]. It has nothing to do with how she feels about my work. At the end of the day, I am still in their environment. You have to comply with what's going on.

The results from Ms. Pink's interview concerning ASCA varied from Ms. Green. Ms. Pink stated that her job description outlined to activities ASCA defined as appropriate. She stated, "everything on here I do except for the academic program planning." Ms. Pink stated that she was surprised that she did not engage in any inappropriate activities. Although Ms. Pink explained that she engaged in appropriate counseling tasks, she stated that it would be "difficult" if she had to follow all of activities dictated by ASCA. She explained:

Well. I think what's difficult is if I look at some of these things, I just don't know how in the world there would be enough time to do all that. Like providing counselling to students who aren't appropriately school dressed or who are tardy or absent. I mean, yes in an ideal situation, the absence stuff, that would be something I would have time to do, or the tardies and everything, but that's really not something. I'm like, if you're here I can deal with you. If you're not, I don't know how to chase you down because so many other things are happening.

Ms. Pink further explained her views on why completing all appropriate counseling activities would be challenging. It continued as follows:

I heard you mention it would be hard to do all these activities that ASCA states so that makes me think how people are on the school counseling team and would having more people on the team be able to help divvy up responsibilities?

If there was another person, yeah.

But most schools typically don't have a full team of...

No, I think we're lucky in a sense that there's actually two of us here. We each have two grades, which is not something that any other school has. Every other school typically, the counselor or social worker is responsible for four grades, or five grades actually if it's in the primary. Poor primary people have kindergarten through fourth grade and then middle is fifth to eighth. So it's pretty atypical that there's two people at this school. This is the first year.

Even thinking about two people per grade, I'm thinking about our proportion and that still sounds like a lot.

Yeah, it's like 300 students per person.

Per person.

I used to have, in the middle school, my caseload, I wasn't really able to see anybody else because I had 37 kids I needed minutes every week. Now I'm more at 24.

So all the other kids who may have issues, their needs aren't being met, nobody really knows what's going on, and school counselors can't really be effective as ASCA would want because there's no time for it.

You're not able to get to that larger population of kids. I think that is tough. That is something I know *Ms. Purple* wishes, because she wants the kids that are not just the special education kids to get services, and I agree because there are times that some of my special education kids don't necessarily really, not that they really need counseling minutes, they need somebody who's able to do a check in with them just make sure they're on track to be doing what they need to be doing, but they don't need counseling in the traditional sense of the word. Because of needing to do all those things, it makes it harder to try and get a group together or things like that.

Concerning the alignment between what school counselors actually do compared to what ASCA outlined, *Ms. Pink* believed that there was a misalignment. She also explained that due to the many responsibilities school counselors have, including mandated services that must be provided for compliance, many students who should receive services or work with school counselors, have no interaction with the school counselor at all. She described her experience as follows:

Yeah. I think some of it goes hand in hand and there's others that it's just like you're trying to do too many different things. I think attendance unfortunately is something that falls on the wayside. Because pretty much when it comes down to where I'm going to put my priority, it's not going to be on dealing with attendance because I'm going to deal with the kids who are here and I can get to. But then the problem is I feel like we're losing a lot of students, too, especially our over-age kids.

Yeah and it's hard to do those school-wide things that you want to do and you should be doing to work with every kid like you really want to do because you've got so much going on and not enough time. That makes sense.

And I think that, what is it *K* was telling me last week? When we were at the conference, she was saying, because I was writing something, like the need for having RTI every week because we have it every other week, and she was like yes, and next year she wants to have more universal screeners happening and everything like that so we are getting a better pulse of the school because I think this year at *M. School* they're doing that, and it's kind of that's their pilot year, trying to figure out they're doing a lot of those universal screenings to see how many kids are really gonna need services. Because I think the hesitation of everyone doing that was like, oh crap, once you screen and you know, you gotta find a way to make sure they're getting the help they need. So I think that's something they're doing at another school in the network this year and hopefully we'll be able to start implementing more. I think that's needed because right now, off the top of my head, when I'm thinking of kids that need services or kids that *Rachel* can see,

I'm just like this is all by word of mouth or certain things, but it's not identifying those kids that we don't know about. There are a whole lot of them that we don't know these things are happening, or they're flying under the radar and stuff like that because maybe they don't have an adult in this building that they've become close with that might know a little bit.

The results from the interview with Ms. Purple highlighted that the needs of students vary on a local level when compared to the counseling tasks outlined by the national ASCA model. Ms. Purple stated, "But when you start to talk about things that are, like, deep seated, trauma-based, on-going, we need somebody and there's just not enough capacity to do that well." Ms. Purple also believed that school counselors faced challenges in effectively delivering services due to variables such as capacity, time, caseload number facing demands, and resources, and access to decision-makers. Ms. Purple also acknowledged the growing level of trauma students deal with nowadays, including trauma from systemic issues. She stated the following concerning the national ASCA model:

The level of trauma in our kids is growing, right. The model might have worked. I mean, black people have had trauma forever, but the kinds of trauma. As the prison populations increase, as the murder rates increase, as poverty increases. I was reading this study where black people in America are roughly the same if not worse than they were... And I'm like of course we're traumatized. It's getting worse, so systems that might have worked, or structures or models, it's not enough.

Likewise, results from Mr. Yellow's interview highlighted the level of trauma students deal with in today's world not just nationally, but locally. Mr. Yellow referenced the issues faced by students in the city of in which he is employed. He believed that part of the misalignment had been created between ASCA and actual school counselor roles in his city after a natural disaster. He described his experience as follows:

I think ASCA, and I'm thinking in terms of generational gaps is the term that comes to mind, but that's not necessarily the thought that I want to convey, but using it as a descriptive tool to kind of shape the understanding. So I think in terms of ten-year windows. So school counseling ten years ago, versus school counseling in the city post natural disaster versus where we are moving in the next ten years, when I factor in the

level of trauma in the community and nationally the rate of school shootings. We live in a pretty violent city, if you will, and the kids at our school are greatly impacted. We've had several students who attend school here who have been involved in shootings. Several students—or at least a handful of students—who have actually lost their lives as a result of being involved in shootings in the community. So all of that activity kind of spills over into our school, and it requires you to have a trauma-focused perspective. You used a term, not crisis management, but it comes to mind often as using it to describe, so I think in context of ASCA, this ideal or platform, if you will, and where we are involved in the city, it has to become more trauma-focused, as opposed to the current. We have to find some type of way—I know we provide grief counseling—but I know in terms of if we're going to be the best service providers and provide the best quality of care, we have to, in some way, shape, or form, be able to provide wraparound services and provide those services in the school setting where we're going to be able to see the kids. We can't guarantee that they're going to actually get the services things come up that would prevent the students from receiving the services in the community. I know a number of kids who I've referred to outside service providers and when I do my follow up to see if they've actually gone to the service providers, sometimes they attend, most of the time they don't because it's a transportation issue, or it's a provider issue. When, if we were providing the service themselves in the school setting...

That makes sense. You actually brought up a good point, because like you said, ASCA is on the national level, but for cities like yours, such a unique place in the violence and crime that we do have here, there do needs to be a focus, but ASCA being national, you have to be more specific in certain cities, especially where the violence and the trauma may be more.

I think in terms of certain cities. There are some other outlying areas, but you understand, when I say large urban population, poor access to mental health treatment, and nine times out of ten, it's the demographics of an age category between 16 and 20 years of age. We kind of fit that same age in demographics, and this is what's going on in the community, and this is somewhat of a most underserved population.

That's a good point, which you actually just touched on. The next question was how do you think the misalignment happens, but you just talked about it, like the violence and the trauma and the crime.

Correct.

Do you think there are any other factors in how the misalignment happens between ASCA and practicing school counselors?

I think alignment happens when schools are out of touch with the communities that they serve, and not staying abreast to the social condition ills that are impacting the societies that we're living in. Then not necessarily working across professions, if you will, like partnering with the various law enforcement agencies, or partnering with other community organizations—it could be hospitals, it could be even as far as partnering with various social organizations.

The results of that dialogue not only emphasized the importance of an understanding of cultural awareness of cities in which the participants work and reside, but it also highlighted awareness to the lack of mental health services and supports in certain cities and areas along with the lack of trust among outside community service providers. Ms. Orange, Mr. Yellow's principal, also acknowledged barriers with mental health in her city. Ms. Orange stated that "there is a lack of mental health care in the city." Lastly, Mr. Yellow also stated that if he were to follow ASCA exactly as it stated in the appropriate activities, "It would be challenging" and "difficult to complete all" tasks. Given the results of the study, school counselors face multiple challenges and many tasks. The results have indicated that ASCA activities should be reexamined. Results also address the need for an actual team of counselors and other staff if the ASCA appropriate activities should be implemented.

Summary

Chapter 4 addressed the results of the qualitative phenomenological study on current school counselor activities. In the analysis from the participant interviews, observations, and logs, four major themes emerged. Subthemes were also categorized under the four major themes. As the themes emerged, it validated the current literature about the school counselor role ambiguity. Answers to the study research questions were also discovered. Chapter 5 will include a further analysis and discussion of the key findings from the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the alignment between the actual school counselor role and practice, and job activities for the appropriate assignment of the school counselor outlined by ASCA. The purpose included examining preservice school counselor training, and the gaps in the preservice curriculum along with gaps in the school leader understanding of the school counselor role. Previous studies have indicated that the school counseling role is unclear and ambiguous, but studies have not addressed the variables that contribute to the ambiguity of the school counseling role. Studies have also identified ASCA and the school counseling tasks that ASCA has identified as appropriate. However, there is a gap in the research concerning the variables in the alignment of ASCA suggested activities compared to tasks current school counselors perform. There is a need for research which focuses on variables that contribute to the misunderstanding of the school counselor role, in addition to understanding variables that contribute to the alignment of ASCA activities compared to duties school counselors currently perform. Therefore, the intention of this phenomenological study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the authentic experience of practicing school counselors and investigate the variables that influence the school counselor role. The objective of this study was to provide insight for school counselors, the school counseling profession, school leaders, and universities who contribute to understanding the school counseling role in providing quality and effective services to students and schools.

The researcher utilized qualitative methods to conduct this phenomenological study. The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to investigate and gain an in-depth understanding of

study participants' experiences through thick, rich descriptions (Gamson, 2000). Upon completion of the interviews, audio recordings were transcribed by a transcriptionist and returned to participants for their review and approval. Keywords and phrases appeared as geographical representations, which were analyzed and encoded with appropriate category labels. Throughout each coding method, commonalities developed. Once codes were categorized, they were compared to one another.

This chapter will discuss the validity of the literature review concerning the role of school counselors. This chapter will also include a discussion of the findings of the research, limitations of the study, and implications. Included in this chapter is an explanation of variables that contribute to inconsistencies in the alignment of practices of current school counselors and the ASCA outlined activities. Recommendations for future studies will follow.

Discussion

This section discusses the interpretation of the findings and the key findings obtained from six in-depth interviews, observations, and counselor logs. The results of this study substantiated the literature from chapter two that students face issues of poverty, homelessness, violence, and even race and class related issues. Likewise, the results of this study validate the literature from chapter two that emphasized that there is an increasing number of students who need services but never receive them.

The results of this study also support the literature that examined how school counselors are often marginally involved in supporting students with needs, and often do not have the time or support needed to address the growing and serious needs of students (DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013). Similarly, the results of the study validated that although ASCA has outlined key areas of personal, social, academic, and academic preparation, school counselors are spread

too thin. The results of the study corroborate with the literature that although ASCA has outlined appropriate activities for school counselors, inconsistencies still exist in appropriate and inappropriate counselor activities, along with training of school counselors for real world practice. Furthermore, the results of the study validated that training for school leaders does not include knowledge concerning the school counselor role.

The four primary emerging themes were a result of the in-depth interviews, along with observations, and logs. Participants discussed their current role and responsibilities, challenges that impacted their role, and the education and training that contributed to being prepared or unprepared for their positions and understanding of their roles. The counselor participants discussed their thoughts and views concerning ASCA compared to tasks that they currently complete and issues they currently face. One theme that emerged from the study was the current school counselor roles and responsibilities. Counseling and non-counseling activities were identified from the counselor participants and the principal participants. All counselor participants stated that they perform a great amount of counseling tasks, but also perform tasks that have been identified as inappropriate tasks or non-counseling tasks. The results indicated that the main non-counseling and/or inappropriate tasks include performing duties, i.e. lunch duty, discipline and/or behavior related issues not relating to counseling, over involvement in attendance management, and testing. Participants were aware of inappropriate and/or non-counseling tasks. However, because they were employed in environments which have high needs and school budget or personnel issues, they seem to understand that they are required to participate in non-counseling tasks. Additionally, if the school principal or administration requests the school counselor to perform tasks outside of their counseling tasks such as testing or duty, the counselors must comply if they want to stay employed. One school counselor

participant discussed the importance of advocating for the school counselor profession, but also stated “if you don’t have the support of your director or your higher-ups in advocating for yourself, I’m not going to sit you in this building and tell my principal what I’m not going to do. If this lady asks me to come and sweep the floor, the floor will get swept, because I’m in their environment.”

An additional theme that emerged from the study was issues that impact the school counselor role. The results from this study found that school counselors have a high number of students on their caseload. It was also revealed that many of the students on the school counselors’ caseload have been identified as special education students. Results from the study revealed that school counselors bill for services they provide to their special education students. Due to the change in the educational structure, such as budget issues and increasing intense needs and dynamics of students and schools, and personnel issues, the school counseling role continues to be impacted. Personal issues and social and emotional issues needs of students continue to rise. School mental-health and counseling services can have positive influences on behavior, academic achievement, school climate, dropout risk, violence and suicide prevention, and school engagement (Heitin, 2013). However, due to factors previously mentioned, school counseling positions have been negatively impacted. And in turn, school counselors face challenges in providing the much-needed services to students and schools. Data from the U.S. Department of Education and its National Center for Education Statistics discovered that, “as ratios worsen and the economy remains anemic, the challenge for schools becomes greater” (Heitin, 2013).

As stated previously, personnel issues and school budgets impact the school counseling role. With a federal emphasis over the past decade with testing-based accountability, schools are

frequently forced to choose between school counselors and academic and instructional staff and interventions (Griffin & Farris, 2010). Consequently, the social and emotional support positions are cut (Griffin & Farris, 2010). Counselors have reported that now they even have a harder time pulling students out of academic instruction when attempting to provide counseling services (Heitin, 2013). Several school counselors have reported that they are only allowed to pull students during lunchtime (Heitin, 2013). Likewise, on testing days, the support staff is regularly pulled in to help test and/or coordinate.

With greater accountability on testing and academic achievement and school budget issues, schools are forced to prioritize certain school personnel. With the impact those factors have on the entire school and school counseling role, schools are forced to restructure their resources. To adjust to school budget issues with the school counseling position, schools have moved towards billing students' insurers or Medicaid (Heitin, 2013). As evidenced in the interviews and school counselor logs, the participants in the study indicated that they also bill for some counseling services they provide.

The school counselor participants stated that they are required to provide weekly sessions to students on their caseload who have IEPs. One school counselor reported that he was the special education counselor. The participant stated that there was an additional full-time counselor at his school, but observations and the interview revealed that the other school counselor was not employed by the school, but a nonprofit organization in the community. The principal of the school voiced that their school has a high special education population. The principal's acknowledgment could explain the school's decision to employ their school counselor as the special education counselor. All principal participants emphasized their school's special education population.

In addition to providing services to the special education population, participants explained that the school counselors should also provide services to the entire school population, in addition to serving on school committees, facilitating wraparound services, school-wide initiative, and crisis management. Although school counselors do not participate in many of inappropriate activities outlined by ASCA, the multiple counseling activities in which they must perform and engage in, results in capacity issues. All participants stressed that with so many different tasks, there is not enough time or capacity to perform all duties. Consequently, the school counselor role is impacted.

Although findings from the study indicated that all schools have some sort of counseling team, the counseling team does not help with the capacity level as it should. The findings of the study revealed that due to the demographic, population, and dynamic of the students and schools of being “higher need”, having “intense needs”, a “large population”, attendance issues, and issues relating to race and class, the amount of members on the school counseling teams are too few to create effective change and provide quality service to all students. Accordingly, the school counselor role is greatly impacted. Findings from the study also supported the literature concerning the principal-counselor relationship. Findings from the study shared that a positive and collaborative relationship between the principal and school leader can have a helpful impact on the school counseling role.

Furthermore, findings from the study revealed that there is still ambiguity with the school counselor roles. One participant explained that people do not understand the school counselor role and voiced miseducation about the school counselor role. The participant stated that “everybody assumes that counselors and social workers do the same thing.” Another participant discussed her experience with one of her former school leader compared to her current leader.

She stated that her current leader understood the importance of mental health, but with her former principal “there was less of a relationship about understanding what it was that I did.”

If there is uncertainty of how school counselors are supposed to be positioned, tasks they are supposed to perform, or even little to no desire to understand what school counselors are supposed to do, the school counselor role will be impacted. Findings from this research also identified the interchange of the school counselor and social worker. A participant emphasized the change in the school system. She stated “the wave has really changed in how school social workers, school counselors, and everything is done. I think the traditional public schools in the city have very strict rules about whether they’ll hire a counselor or social worker but in the charter school system, they don’t.” She explained the difference between counseling and social work stating, “counseling focuses more on technique and theory and the stuff you have to do, and the fact that you have to do a year and a half before you were even allowed to do a practicum or internship and anything, you had to take pretty much every class and that was your last year you were doing that. I think it’s slightly different where I think social workers do more policy and things like that.”

Likewise, it was discovered from the findings that the principal participants often used the terms “counselors” and “social workers” interchangeably, as if they were the same identity. For example, when the researcher asked a principal participant about any educational background that has helped her understand how to properly position school counselors, she stated “special education helped me understand more, and ask more questions about like what is social work meant to look like in a school.” The other principal also linked social worker and counselors together. When asked how she worked with the school counselor she stated, “the counselors and social workers work with the special education student.” The remaining principal

participant only had counselors employed at her school, so she only used the term school counselor. The results of the study also discovered that the middle school has a system in which counselors are evaluated by a director who is employed out of central office versus the actual school assignment. Findings from the study highlighted that the overall roles of the school counselors are dictated by those on the district school level as opposed to the school leader at the schools, but the school leaders have some input. Considering all of these factors, an unclear understanding or lack of desire to understand the school counseling role can impact the school counselor role.

Education and training was an additional theme that emerged from the study. Findings from the study revealed that school counselors and principals both identified lack of training in their respective fields. The counselor participants stated that although they completed classes in school counseling, they were unprepared for the real-life issues currently in the schools. Participants, therefore, had to learn on the job. Special education was identified as the main area in which participants had more hands-on training, and an area in which they desire additional training. Likewise, learning to use systems to bill for such services occurred on the job as well. As previously discussed, the needs of the students and schools have increased to a higher special education population. However, the school counselor participants stated that they received no special education classes or even trainings regarding how to write BIPs, complete FBAs, or appropriate and effective services and interventions for students who have IEPs.

Likewise, the principal participants also shared their lack of training and knowledge regarding the school counselor role. Like the counselor participants, the principals stated that they also had to learn about the school counselor role from an on the job training method. The two principal participants who had advanced degrees in educational leadership or education

administration, had no coursework regarding school counselors. Additionally, professional developments about counseling also emerged as a method in the school that could help the education and understanding of the school counselor role and position but is not used or offered as a tool to do so. Findings also revealed that although schools provide required professional developments for school staff, the professional developments do not address any counseling related issues or techniques. School counselors cannot use any of those professional developments in place of their CEUs.

The last major theme that emerged from the study was views and thoughts about ASCA. The findings indicated that although ASCA addressed issues on a national level, it does not consider issues that students and schools face locally and in their community. Findings revealed that participants expressed that issues of shootings, violence, crime, class, and race are now a regular part of their school communities. Although ASCA has outlined responsibilities of school counselors that seem “ideal”, ASCA does not consider the population and dynamics of the school. Therefore, it would be “challenging” to perform all tasks. Concerning appropriate ASCA activities, an additional counselor participant stated, “I don’t know how in the world there would be enough time to do all that.”

Implications for the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the alignment of ASCA activities outlined for school counselors in comparison to tasks school counselors actually performed. The study examined the current school counselor role of practicing school counselors, along with the training, knowledge and education of school counselors and school leadership. This study addressed the gaps in research concerning the variables that contribute to alignment between ASCA defined school counselor activities and practices of current school counselors. The

implications drawn from this study will hopefully increase the limited literature concerning variables that contribute to the discrepancy in ASCA defined activities compared to the current activities of school counselors.

The rich, descriptive interviews from the participants, along with observations and logs, detailed variables that contribute to the ambiguity of the school counselor role and the inconsistencies in ASCA outlined school counselor activities compared to current school counselor practices. The emerging themes of this study provide current school counselor and future school counselors insight into how to provide clarity to the school counselor role. The themes also provide insight to school counseling programs and school leader programs in how to effectively train school counselors and leaders in providing an understanding of current issues faced by students, current school counselor needs and school counselor barriers. It also provides insight in variables that can contribute to the quality and effective services students currently receive from school counselors. The results likewise provide insight to ASCA in revealing current issues of students, the actual role of the practicing school counselors, and capacity issues that make it “challenging” to complete all suggested school counselor activities.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations exist in qualitative phenomenological research. For this study, initial limitations surrounded the interviews. Participant timeliness, availability, and log submission was anticipated as potential limitations. Timeliness and availability was addressed by scheduling appointments with participants at times convenient to them. Due to school events and schedules, majority of one counselor participant observations were observed during a school-wide field trip.

Additionally, log collection of school counselor activities presented further issues. The researcher had created a school counselor log in which the counselor participants could

document their activities. However, considering the time it would take to complete the logs and the awareness that most of the school counselor participants document their activities in a database used by their schools, the actual school logs and documentation method used by the school counselors was collected in place of the logs created by the researcher. The researcher addressed this limitation by validating that the school documentation and log method collected the same activities as the researcher created counselor logs. One counselor participant, however, stated that she would use the log created by the researcher. Although the researcher reminded that counselor participant about the logs frequently, the logs were not completed and submitted. The researcher addressed this issue by using the detailed observations for a longer period of time.

Another limitation included the researcher. As the interpreter of the data and a Licensed Professional Counselor who has worked in several schools, the researcher's experience could have influenced how the researcher questioned and interpreted data during the interview process. The researcher addressed this limitation by using bracketing to decrease bias and by debriefing with peers (Moustakas, 1994). An additional limitation with phenomenological interviewing is the assumption that narratives shared by the participants were true and actual experiences. Observations, log collections, and the researcher's use of clarification, and reflecting and reframing techniques used during the interviews was a method to clarify the feelings associated with the school counselor role. Furthermore, the researcher had no reason to believe that the participants were untruthful in their narratives. Moreover, the universality of themes that was repeated by multiple participants, strengthens the veracity of the data.

An additional limitation of this study was the use of the sampling strategy. Sampling strategy can limit the types of participants. The findings came from three different schools with school counselors and school leaders who had varying experience levels in their field. One

school counselor participant identified a school counselor who she stated would be great for the study due to the school population and school issues. However, the school counselor that she identified did not respond to the researchers' emails, calls, and texts. The researcher then returned to previous nominations of school counselors from co-workers, classmates, college staff, friends, and family. This method made it more simple and possible for the school leaders of the school counselors to participate in the study. The counselor participants were interviewed before their school leaders. They were then able to inform their schools leaders about their experience, which made them feel more comfortable and open. Nevertheless, the interviews made the findings of the study generalizable to alternative high schools, traditional charter high schools, and public middle schools.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study offer guidelines on the school counselor role, the school counseling profession and training, school leadership training, and considerations regarding ASCA outlined activities. Additionally, the study fills the gap in the literature regarding variables that contribute to the ambiguity of the school counselor role and inconsistencies of ASCA outlined activities compared to current and practicing school counselors. Although the results of this study validated current research about the ambiguity of the school counselor role and inconsistencies between the ASCA outlined activities, this study also raised further issues that should be considered in the future.

Through utilizing a phenomenological approach, this research study illustrated personal experiences from participants of their own schools, environments, and training. Even though extensive knowledge was obtained from the stories, there is still much more research left to be completed. To further strengthen the findings, a follow up study with more representation of

diverse school counselors and leaders from various cities and/or states, including a population of rural, urban and suburban areas, could be replicated among elementary, middle, and high schools. Considering the issues identified in the study that students currently face, future research may also want to consider school counselor and leader ethnicity and/or cultural background, and the cultural and/or ethnicity background of their school environments.

Results of this study also indicated that school counselor and school leader education and training for school counselors and school leaders need to prepare school counselors and leaders more in current, effective, and practical methods. One counselor participant enrolled in the clinical track versus the school counseling track. Therefore, all counselor training programs may need to consider adding school counseling classes as a requirement in their programs and include an additional course that teaches behavior disorders of children and adolescents for all students. Furthermore, school counselor education and training should include special education classes and special education internship experiences. More specifically, school counseling programs should prepare school counselors to understand and write BIPs, along with understanding and completing FBAs. School counselor programs should also consider stressing the importance of explaining and defining a clear understanding of the school counselor role in a way in which school counselors can articulate it to others. School counselor programs should also stress the importance of teaching school counselors to advocate for their roles and appropriate activities, and the importance of a collaborative principal-counselor relationship. Likewise, school leader programs should also consider implementing classes regarding the school counselor position, appropriate assignment of school counselors along with clarification of appropriate and inappropriate counseling responsibilities, and the importance of the principal-counselor relationship.

Additionally, this study indicated that ASCA needs to consider other factors when outlining their national model of appropriate and inappropriate activities of school counselors. The variables ASCA should consider include considering the population of the school, demographic of the students, and dynamics of the students and overall school. For example, rural, urban, and suburban settings should be considered. Results revealed that ASCA should also consider the local issues students experience in their communities, such as high crime or poverty levels. Moreover, results indicated that ASCA may need to consider the multiple tasks and caseloads concerning school counselors. ASCA should consider suggesting a full-team of three to four counselors, along with suggesting a school psychologist, and coordination with the special education department, to ensure that school counselors can provide quality and effective school-wide initiatives and services to all students. ASCA should also consider that due to staffing issues or budgetary circumstances, school counselors may be asked to participate in non-counseling activities such as testing or duty if school counselors plan to stay employed in schools.

While this study was being written and completed, ACA and ASCA announced “a new collaborative relationship that will support the continued growth of both organizations as we continue to serve the best interests of school counselors nationwide.” The announcement declared that ASCA and ACA would separate. The announcement stated as of April 1, 2018, both organizations would operate “independently and autonomously.” ACA and ASCA detailed that they would continue to work together on shared advocacy matters that “strengthen the work of school counselors to support children and adolescents.” Future studies would need to identify changes that would occur due to the split between ACA and ASCA. Future studies will also have to determine if those changes will align more closely with issues plagued by students and schools

today, along with adequately balancing current school counselor activities based on the previous subthemes that have been identified that impact the school counselor role.

Conclusion

The stories shared, and data collected by participants, were in-depth descriptions of their experiences and perceptions of the school counseling role. The insight gained from the study detailed current experiences of practicing school counselors and school leaders. The four major themes that emerged from the study also provided insight into the ambiguity of the school counselor role, along with factors that create the inconsistencies between ASCA defined activities and current responsibilities of practicing school counselors. As there has been an evolution in the world, there has also been in evolution in education, including the population and dynamics of students and schools. If school counselors are to provide quality and effective services to all students in their school environments, the school counselor role must be clear. Likewise, school districts, school counselor training programs, school leader programs, and ASCA must adapt to meet the needs of students and schools currently. With a clear understanding of the school counselor role, adaptation to meet current and anticipated needs and changes among students, communities, and school systems, along with proper assignment of school counselors, school counselors can be positioned to increase student success.

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APPENDIX A

Following is the IRB Approval Letter the researcher received from Xavier University Letter to conduct the study.



**XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

1 Drexel Drive • Box 115
New Orleans, Louisiana 70125-1098
(504) 520-7400 • Fax: (504) 520-7952

TO: Candace M. Williams, MA, Principal Investigator

FROM: Charles A. Gramlich, PhD
Chair of the Xavier University IRB

DATE: January 8, 2018

RE: Research Proposal entitled: "THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE:
UNDERSTANDING VARIABLES THAT CREATE THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE ACTUAL
SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE AND THE ROLE OUTLINED BY ASCA

On January 8, 2018, I received an amendment request for this study. The changes include a title change, the addition of more participants, and a few other minor alterations in protocol. It also includes the updated and complete interview questions. The changes do not lead to any increased concerns for the participants and are eligible for expedited review. The revised study is approved as of the date of this memo.

This study is approved for a period of one year from the date of this memo. Any changes to the proposal that might affect the wellbeing of participants must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Any request to continue this study for more than one year must be approved by the Xavier IRB at least two weeks prior to 1-8-2019. Please inform the Chair of the IRB when all data collection has been completed.

This project is assigned study number #647 in the IRB files. Please refer to this project number in future correspondence regarding the study.

Reviewed and Approved

Charles A. Gramlich
Chair of the Xavier University IRB

FWA00004443

cc. Dr. Deborah Marshall, Associate VP Research and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX B

Following is the Informed Consent the researcher provided to the participants of the study.

Informed Consent:

Title of Study: THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE: UNDERSTANDING VARIABLES THAT CREATE THE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE ACTUAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR ROLE AND THE ROLE OUTLINED BY ASCA

Principal Investigator:

Name: Candace Williams

Department: Xavier University of Louisiana, Division of Education and Counseling

Address: 1 Drexel Dr, New Orleans, LA 70125

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: cmwillia@xula.edu

Background:

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is: investigate the discrepancy between the actual school counselor role and experience, and job description for the appropriate assignment of the school counselor outlined by ASCA. The purpose includes examining preservice school counselor training, appropriate activities delineated by ASCA compared to the current school counselor experience to determine how the misalignment happens, and what can be done to ensure the appropriate assignment of the school counselor. The study seeks to answer four questions: 1) If perceived discrepancies exist between actual school counselor roles and ASCA crafted activities, what are the discrepancies? 2) How do the discrepancies between actual school counselor roles and ASCA job activities happen? 3) How do school counselor duties and time spent align with their current practice in supporting student success? (i.e. are school counselors performing duties outside of their role not related to student success); and 4) How effectively did preservice training prepare school counselors for their current role as a school counselor?

Study Procedure:

Your expected time commitment for this study is: 2 months.

In the first month, there will be one face to face interview that will last from an hour to an hour and a half. In the second month, a follow up interview will be conducted, either in person or over the phone. This will last 15 to 30 minutes, and will look at any additional thoughts a participant may have had since the initial interview.

Risks:

The risks of this study are minimal. These risks are like those you experience when disclosing work-related information to others. The topics in the survey may upset some respondents. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Benefits:

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may be able to better help training for school counselors and school leaders. It may further bring awareness to actual school counselor practices and the alignment between best practices crafted by the American School Counseling Association.

Alternative Procedures:

If you do not want to be in the study, you may choose not to participate.

Confidentiality:

For the purposes of this research project your comments will not be anonymous unless you request that they be. You may request that all or part of your responses be kept anonymous at any time.

Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all researcher notes and documents.

- Notes, interview transcriptions, and transcribed notes and any other identifying participant information will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher. When no longer necessary for research, all materials will be destroyed.
- The researcher and the members of the researcher's committee will review the researcher's collected data. Information from this research will be used solely for this study and any publications that may result from this study. Any final publication will contain the names of the public figures that have consented to participate in this study (unless a public figure participant has requested anonymity): all other participants involved in this study will not be identified and their anonymity will be maintained.

- Each participant can obtain a transcribed copy of their interview.

Participants should tell the researcher if a copy of the interview is desired.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

Person to Contact:

Should you have any questions about the research or any related matters, please contact the researcher, Candace Williams, at cmwillia@xula.edu or [REDACTED].

Institutional Review Board:

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Investigator, please contact the Institutional Review Board office at ORSP@xula.edu.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether to take part in this study. If you do decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part in this study, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. You are free to not answer any question or questions if you choose. This will not affect the relationship you have with the researcher.

Unforeseeable Risks:

There may be risks that are not anticipated. However, every effort will be made to minimize any risks.

Costs to Subject:

There are no costs to you for your participation in this study.

Compensation:

There is no monetary compensation to you for your participation in this study.

Consent:

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C

Following is Mr. Yellow's Log Documentation that the researcher collected from the participant.

Mr. Yellow

Provider Events

3/7/2018 3:45 PM

Year: 2017-18

Dates: 2/1/2018 - 2/28/2018

Category	Subject	Date	Start Time	Duration	Status	Notes
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/1/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/1/2018	10:00 AM	15		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/1/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/1/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	AI Mx	2/2/2018	8:00 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/2/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Student Re-Scheduled Mins	2/2/2018	9:00 AM	150		
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/2/2018	10:00 AM	15		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/2/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/2/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Office Planning Time	2/2/2018	1:00 PM	180		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	RAHS Staff Mx	2/5/2018	7:45 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/5/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/5/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/5/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/6/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/6/2018	10:00 AM	15		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/6/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/6/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	CBI Mx	2/7/2018	8:00 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/7/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/7/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/7/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/8/2018	8:30 AM	30		
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/8/2018	10:00 AM	15		
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/8/2018	11:30 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/8/2018	12:00 PM	60		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	AI Mx	2/9/2018	8:00 AM	30		
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/9/2018	8:30 AM	30		



1/28/2018

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Activity	Staff	Date	Start Time	Duration	Staff
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Student Re-Scheduled Mins	2/9/2018	9:00 AM	150	
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/9/2018	10:00 AM	15	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/9/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/9/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Office Planning Time	2/9/2018	1:00 PM	180	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	RAHS Staff Mx	2/19/2018	7:45 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/19/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/19/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/19/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/20/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/20/2018	10:00 AM	15	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/20/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/20/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	CBI Mx	2/21/2018	8:00 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/21/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/21/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/21/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/22/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/22/2018	10:00 AM	15	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/22/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/22/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	AI Mx	2/23/2018	8:00 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/23/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Student Re-Scheduled Mins	2/23/2018	9:00 AM	150	
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/23/2018	10:00 AM	15	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/23/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/23/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Office Planning Time	2/23/2018	1:00 PM	180	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	RAHS Staff Mx	2/26/2018	7:45 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/26/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/26/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/26/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/27/2018	8:30 AM	30	

[illegible]

Activity	Setting	Date	Start Time	Duration	Session
Classwide Intervention	Advisory	2/27/2018	10:00 AM	15	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/27/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/27/2018	12:00 PM	60	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	CBI Mx	2/28/2018	8:00 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Morning Duty	2/28/2018	8:30 AM	30	
Lunch	Personal Lunch Time	2/28/2018	11:30 AM	30	
Administrative Tasks (Collecting Docs, etc.)	Lunch Duty	2/28/2018	12:00 PM	60	

Notes	Date Entered
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018
	2/26/2018

3/16/2018

Home

Mr. Yellow

Inbox Support Settings

Logout

Home Account Tools Requester

Home

My Caseload

We are pleased to announce that the new OT & PT evaluation codes are added for all Occupational and Physical Therapists. They have been implemented by The American Physical Therapy Association and The American Medical Association. Their goal is to capture more detailed evaluations and re-evaluations. For more information on these new codes please see the training materials link in the Toolbox.

Toolbox

Have a great Week!
-Accellify Team

Quick Cal

My Caseload My Calendar

My Quick Recorder

My Services

My Evaluations

My Student Activities

My Activities

My Groups

My Dashboard

Type student's name or ID

Q

Today

Monday, March 12, 2018 - Friday, March 16, 2018

7:00 AM

Monday 12

Tuesday 13

Wednesday 14

Thursday 15

Friday 16

Day

Week

Week

Month

8:00 AM

Staff Nix (7:45 AM - 8:15 AM)

Morning Duty (8:30 AM - 9:00 AM)

Morning Duty (8:30 AM - 9:00 AM)

CBI Nix (8:00 AM - 8:30 AM)

Morning Duty (8:30 AM - 9:00 AM)

Morning Duty (8:30 AM - 9:00 AM)

AI Nix (8:00 AM - 8:30 AM)

Morning Duty (8:30 AM - 9:00 AM)

<https://la.accelplan.com/app/home>

3/16/2018

Home			
9:00 AM			Student Rg Scheduled H 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM
10:00 AM	ART Gp 1 (10:30 AM - 11:00 AM) Delivered 0 of 6	ART Gp 1 (10:30 AM - 11:00 AM) Delivered 0 of 6	ART Gp 1 (10:30 AM - 11:00 AM) Delivered 0 of 6
11:00 AM			Personal Lunch Time (11:30 AM - 12:00 PM)
12:00 PM			Lunch Duty (12:00 PM - 1:00 PM)

Print Print Agenda Export

<input type="checkbox"/> Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed non-student activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Student activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed student activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled Services and Evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/> Grouped student services
<input type="checkbox"/> Partially delivered grouped services	<input type="checkbox"/> Partially completed non delivered grouped services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed non-delivered services
<input type="checkbox"/> Delivered administrator approved services	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivered supervisor approved services	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivered/Completed Services and Evaluations
<input type="checkbox"/> Claimed Services and Evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/> Services from changed/removed prescription	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejected Services and Evaluations

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APPENDIX D

Following is Ms. Green's Log Documentation that the researcher collected from the participant.

Ms. Green**Provider Services**

3/6/2018 10:43 AM

Year: 2017-18
 Month: August, September, October, November, December
 Dates: 8/1/2017 - 7/31/2018

Student Name	Service Date	Delivery Status	Total Mins	Entered by	Enter Date
(Behavioral Health Services)					
[REDACTED]	12/13/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/13/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/12/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/12/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/12/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/11/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/11/2017	Delivered	60	417961	1/9/2018
[REDACTED]	12/11/2017	Delivered	60	417961	12/13/2017
[REDACTED]	12/7/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/13/2017
[REDACTED]	12/7/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/13/2017
[REDACTED]	12/7/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/13/2017
[REDACTED]	12/6/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/6/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/5/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/5/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/5/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/4/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/4/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/1/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	12/1/2017	Delivered	30	417961	12/12/2017
[REDACTED]	11/30/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/29/2017	Delivered	60	417961	12/13/2017
[REDACTED]	11/28/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/28/2017	Delivered	30	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/27/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/17/2017	Delivered	30	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/17/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/17/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/16/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/16/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/15/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/15/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/14/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/14/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017
[REDACTED]	11/14/2017	Delivered	60	417961	11/30/2017

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[REDACTED]	9/6/2017	Delivered	30	417961	9/19/2017
[REDACTED]	9/6/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/19/2017
Not Enrolled, Student	9/6/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/19/2017
Not Enrolled, Student	8/29/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
Not Enrolled, Student	8/29/2017	Delivered	90	417961	9/1/2017
Not Enrolled, Student	8/28/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
[REDACTED]	8/28/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
Not Enrolled, Student	8/28/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
[REDACTED]	8/24/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
[REDACTED]	8/24/2017	Delivered	60	417961	9/1/2017
[REDACTED]	8/24/2017	Delivered	75	417961	9/1/2017
Presentation, Classroom	8/23/2017	Delivered	225	417961	8/31/2017
[REDACTED]	8/22/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/31/2017
[REDACTED]	8/22/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/31/2017
[REDACTED]	8/22/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/31/2017
[REDACTED]	8/22/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/31/2017
[REDACTED]	8/21/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/21/2017
[REDACTED]	8/21/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/21/2017
[REDACTED]	8/15/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/21/2017
[REDACTED]	8/15/2017	Delivered	60	417961	8/21/2017

Ms. Green

Provider Events

3/6/2018 10:40 AM

Year: 2017-18
 Month: August, September, October
 Dates: 8/1/2017 - 7/31/2018

Category	Subject	Date	Start Time	Duration	Status	Notes
Administrative Tasks	Welcoming students , academic contracts , finding uniforms .	8/10/2017	7:30 AM	390	Completed	First day stuff
Administrative Tasks	contacting students and parents. Our student list is not updated in Acelify, So I can not post services with students	8/11/2017	7:30 AM	390	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	Consultation with Parents and community workers Peer consultation Organizing presentation for all grades Classroom Presentations Lunch Individual/ and group work Working on calendar	8/14/2017	8:00 AM	360	Completed	Consultation with Pa and community work Peer consultation Organizing presenta all grades Classroom Presenta Lunch Individual/ and group Working on calendai
Administrative Tasks	Planning interventions Planning interventions and documentation Accelify documentation Referrals to community resources Classroom Presentations Files Individual/ and group work Abit Meeting	8/16/2017	7:45 AM	375	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	Teacher/staff consultation Lunch Individual work Group work Accelify documentation ISS Individual/ and group work	8/17/2017	7:45 AM	405	Completed	Teacher/staff consul Lunch Individual work Group work Accelify documentat ISS Individual/ and group Consultation with Pa and community work
Administrative Tasks	Consultation with Parents and community workers Peer consultation Organizing presentation for all grades Abit Meeting Classroom Presentations Lunch Individual/ and group work	8/18/2017	7:45 AM	405	Completed	Peer consultation Organizing presenta all grades Abit Meeting Classroom Presenta Lunch Individual/ and group
Administrative Tasks	returning class, finding uniforms , reviewing data	8/23/2017	12:30 PM	90	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	working on mentor ship program student list	8/24/2017	7:45 AM	375	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	documentation / planning for next week	8/25/2017	7:45 AM	375	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	looking for shelter for a family, team meeting	8/28/2017	7:45 AM	405	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	notes , calls , parent request	8/30/2017	7:45 AM	405	Completed	

Administrative Tasks	Notes calls parents request	8/31/2017	7:45 AM	405	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	Academic contract	9/1/2017	7:45 AM	375	Completed	Notes- saw 10 kids, after Labor day
Administrative Tasks	calls , responding to emails , notes , setting up activitives for students	9/6/2017	7:45 AM	375	Completed	
Administrative Tasks	Working in between students	10/30/2017	7:30 AM	270	Completed	called Parents, plan events , replied to ei worked on administr team consulting
Administrative Tasks	Work between students	10/31/2017	7:45 AM	225	Completed	called Parents, plan events , replied to ei worked on administr team consulting

Ms. Green**Provider Time**

Year: 2017-18

Month: January, February, March, August, September, October, November, December

Dates: 8/1/2017 - 7/31/2018

3/6/2018 10:31 AM

Provider Name	Provider Type	Time Logged with Students	Time Logged on Events	Total Working Hours Available	Total Time with Students %	Total Time on Events %	Total Working Hours %	Total Time Logged	Total Time Logged with Students %	Total Time Logged on Events %
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR		11655	10620	60480	19.27%	17.56%	36.83%	22275	52.32%	47.68%

Appendix D

